

Arab League convenes over peace crisis

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid Tuesday chaired an urgent meeting of the pan-Arab group to discuss Israeli reprisal measures against Palestinians after last week's bombing in Jerusalem. The meeting attended by the permanent delegates of the 22-member pan-Arab group is expected to denounce the harsh Israeli sanctions and is being held at the request of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). "Israel's brutal sanctions and their dangerous repercussions on the Palestinian people and the peace process are the only item on the agenda of the one-day meeting," Egypt's MENA news agency reported. Participants, meeting behind closed doors, will discuss a "common Arab position" to counter the Israeli measures based on a memorandum submitted by the PNA listing the sanction imposed on them, MENA said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جودان تيمز يومية مستقلة تعكس تصورات المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية والرأي

Korean plane crash kills hundreds

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — A fire was reported aboard a Korean air jetliner shortly before it crashed early Wednesday on approach to the Guam International Airport, a Pentagon official said. The U.S. Pacific command in Honolulu, Hawaii received a report from the tower at the airport that there was an onboard fire before the airliner crashed, the official said. The airline crashed into a mountain side six kilometres short of the landing field. A press statement said that there were at least 25 survivors out of 254 passengers. Authorities have not decided whether the reason behind the crash was a long-term plane defect or a problem that surfaced in light of the crash.

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Crown Prince visits Israel in bid to revive peace talks

Tarawneh says closure of bridge in violation of Jordan-Israel peace treaty; Ross expected Saturday

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein has delegated His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to visit Israel Wednesday for talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on means of overcoming the obstacles facing the peace process.

During the one-day visit Prince Hassan will also discuss with Mr. Netanyahu restarting the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks and ending the punitive measures Israel has taken against the Palestinian territories following last week's suicide attack in Jerusalem.

The visit, on which Prince Hassan will be accompanied by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh, represents a continuation of Jordanian endeavours to put the peace process back on track and complements Egyptian and U.S. efforts to end the impasse in the peace talks, according to a statement from the Crown Prince's office.

The Jordanian effort stems from the country's firm belief that resuming the peace talks between Israel and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) and reinvigorating the peace process is the only available option to all parties, the statement said.

The visit comes two days

after Amman witnessed intensified contacts aimed at reviving the peace talks with King Hussein holding talks with PNA President Yasser Arafat who left Amman yesterday and discussing the peace efforts with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Mr. Netanyahu and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright during phone conversations Monday evening. The talks with Mr. Arafat were attended by Prince Hassan, Dr. Majali Dr. Tarawneh and other officials.

In a joint press conference with Mr. Arafat before the PNA president ended his two-day visit here, Dr. Majali said that King Hussein agreed with Mr. Mubarak and Ms. Albright to intensify contacts to overcome the situation that has worsened since the July 30 double suicide bombing in Jerusalem, in which 13 Israelis were killed and 150 injured.

Dr. Tarawneh criticised the Israeli decision to close the King Hussein Bridge, which links Jordan with the West Bank, and said the move was against the spirit and letter of Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

"We should not forget that Egypt and Jordan have peace treaties with Israel, and they are directly responsible for security and therefore the closure of borders or crossing points are regarded as a violation



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat gestures as he answers a question at a press conference held after talks with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Tuesday (Photo by Yusef 'Allan)

of these peace treaties," Dr. Tarawneh said in an interview with Jordan Television on Tuesday.

"Are the peace process and the Oslo accords concerned only with security," the minister asked. "It is true that security is a basic factor in the peace process but it is not everything," he added.

U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Dennis Ross is expected in the region as part of collective efforts to solve the Palestinian-Israeli crisis, Dr. Tarawneh said in the interview.

At the Royal Court Tuesday, Mr. Arafat briefed the

King on the "suffering of the Palestinians under the Israeli embargo and measures the PNA is undertaking to ensure the resumption of peace talks with the Israelis," Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

King Hussein said that Jordan was ready to extend all efforts that would enhance peace and ease tension between the PNA and Israel, Petra added.

Following his one-hour meeting with Dr. Majali at the Prime Ministry, President Arafat lashed out at the Israeli premier saying that Israel's punitive measures against the Palesti-

ans were aimed at "destroying the peace process and humiliating the Palestinian people."

"These criminal acts, the starvation of the Palestinian people, the siege, border closures... sending Israeli tanks and armoured vehicles to our cities and towns, sealing off Palestinian cities... are violations of what has been agreed upon," said Mr. Arafat who had reportedly held talks with the Iraqi ambassador to Jordan at the Iraqi embassy Monday evening. The meeting with the Iraqi

(Continued on page 7)

Elections set for November 4, opposition remains in disunity

By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government yesterday declared Tuesday, November 4, the official polling day for upcoming parliamentary elections, but the official announcement did not seem to draw the country's eleven opposition parties into a unified stand regarding an elections boycott. The announcement also drew criticism from parties already committed to the boycott.

"We would have preferred that this decision would have been taken according to a national agreement," said Salem Nahas, secretary general of the People's Democratic Party (Al Hashd), which has joined the Islamic Action Front (IAF) and three other parties in a decision to boycott the upcoming polls. "The

decision of the government to schedule the elections without discussing it means that they don't give any importance to dialogue."

The government has said that it is willing to meet with opposition parties regarding the controversy over the elections, but a source from the prime ministry told the Jordan Times yesterday that none of the opposition parties has requested a meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

However, Abdullah Ensour was quoted yesterday as saying that the government was not in a position to acquiesce to the opposition's demands.

"Changing the law demands a majority," he said. "The demand of the minority to change law is undemocratic. The decision makers are the Parliament and not the

minority or the government. Even if the government wanted to change the laws, it can't change decisions of Parliament."

The main demands of the IAF are related to the one-man, one-vote electoral system, the failing peace process and economic legislation which they say opens the door to "the enemy's participation in the economy."

"The peace process has not been forced on this government or the previous one," said Mr. Ensour. "The Parliament voted for it and it had a majority of votes. The Parliament can change it at any time, and this is a right of the [next] Parliament."

"Calling for changes of legislation is a demand to override democracy," he

(Continued on page 7)

Top EU envoy makes first visit to Iraq since Gulf war

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid Emma Bonino opened talks here Tuesday to assess the situation in Iraq, on the highest level European Union (EU) visit since the 1991 Gulf war which devastated the country.

Iraqi officials said Ms. Bonino, heading a 15-member delegation, met Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz and Health Minister Umud Medhat Mubarak.

"The mission is a humanitarian assessment mission, just to see what is needed," Ms. Bonino said on arrival. She said the EU has allocated more than 300 million ECUs (\$318 million) in humanitarian aid to Iraq since 1991.

During her three-day visit, Ms. Bonino who flew in on a special flight from Brussels Monday, is expected to visit several Baghdad hospitals and travel to both the north and south of Iraq to inspect EU-funded projects.

The EU adopted measures

last year to provide food aid worth nine million ECUs (\$9.54 million) for three million displaced people in all parts of the country.

Other EU aid projects in sanctions-hit Iraq involve health, water supply, sanitation systems, education and agriculture. The aid is being supplied through the Red Cross as well as European and U.N. agencies. Baghdad has been under crippling sanctions since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait that triggered the Gulf war.

Iraq can rush oil exports to market

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq can export its quota of crude oil under the U.N.-approved oil-for-food programme within the next month, an official of the oil ministry said Tuesday.

The official did not discuss, however, whether such a move could depress prices on the international oil market.

Under a plan that went into effect last December, Iraq was allowed to sell up to \$2 billion worth of crude every six months to buy needed food and medicine. Sales periods are divided into two — 90-day periods.

The plan was renewed by

the U.N. Security Council on June 8.

But the Iraqis linked the resumption of crude exports to U.N. approval of a new food distribution plan. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan approved the plan on Monday, although an oil-pricing plan still awaits a U.N. okay.

The Baghdad oil official said Iraq can export \$1.07 billion in crude by this period's cut-off date of Sept. 5.

"I feel confident that we can export the quantities within the time limits set by the United Nations," he said.

He noted that U.N. regulations allowed for a few days slippage.

He added: "I expect it to be at least next week before we start pumping oil," the ministry official spoke on condition his name not be used.

Iraq exported oil at a rate of about 750,000 barrels per day (bpd) during the first phase of the programme, some 400,000 bpd via Turkey and 350,000 bpd through Mina Al Bakr port in southern Iraq.

To meet the deadline for this 90-day period, it will have to triple that output.

The official said he expected Iraq could export one million bpd via both Turkey and Mina Al Bakr.

Israel arrests 11 more Palestinians; withholds badly needed PNA funds

Combined agency dispatches

THE ISRAELI army arrested 11 more Palestinians on the West Bank overnight in an ongoing roundup of suspected militants launched after a double suicide bombing in Jerusalem last week, officials said.

The overnight arrests brought to 156 the number of Palestinians detained since the bombings last Wednesday.

Israel's decision to withhold financial transfers to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) will hurt the level of security in the territories, Maher Kurd said, economic adviser to President Yasser Arafat.

"Where the emphasis of PNA activities is on [boosting] security [withholding funds] is like shooting oneself in one's foot, causing a degree of ineffectiveness," Mr. Kurd told the Jerusalem Post in an interview published Tuesday.

He declined to reveal how much the PNA spends on security in the Palestinian self-ruled West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israeli Finance Minister Yaacov Neeman has told officials of his ministry that he intends "observing to the letter" the security cabinet's decision to hold back the transfers, which include customs and value added tax (VAT) payments.

The decision, taken after two suicide bombers killed 13 people in a Jerusalem market last week, cuts off 60 per cent of the PNA's funding, Mr. Kurd said.

"This is effectively a cancellation of the Paris Protocol," he said, referring to the 1994 agreement which laid the framework for Israeli-Palestinian economic cooperation.

"The decision to hold back the payments was a serious breach of the agreement," a senior government official said. "But so was the terror attack."

The official said the transfers would likely resume in a week.

Israel transfers on average 115 million to 120 million shekels a month in customs and VAT along with 40 million shekels in petroleum tax receipts.

Mr. Kurd said vital services such as security and health will be funded to some extent from other sources at the expense of other PNA activities.

Even more significant than the loss of funding is the effective cancellation of the Paris agreement, he said.

"Its cornerstone is revenue sharing," he said. "Once this is subject to ministerial decision, the whole agreement is in question."

The PNA is examining alternative courses of action, such as stepping up

(Continued on page 7)

Mubarak warns that weakening Arafat is very dangerous

Combined agency dispatches

EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT Hosni Mubarak Tuesday urged Israel to lift an economic blockade of Palestinian areas, warning that the sanctions will weaken Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and jeopardise the peace process.

"Weakening the position of Arafat is very, very dangerous in the peace process," Mr. Mubarak told reporters after talks here with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy.

"It is very important to keep him in power and those who don't believe that, let them wait and see," he said. Mr. Mubarak also compared the Israeli crackdown on Palestinians to the suicide bombing in that it harms innocent people and demanded that it be condemned. "Since we condemn terrorism that kills innocent people, we should at the same time say 'no' to imposing a siege on the Palestinian people," he said after talks with Mr. Levy.

Mr. Levy defended Israel's economic sanctions and travel ban on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and insisted that the Palestinian National Authority step up security cooperation with

Israel.

For months, Egypt has been trying to get Israeli-Palestinian peace talks back on track.

Mr. Mubarak said he discussed with Mr. Levy the Israeli reprisal measures imposed on the Palestinians, including the closure of the Israeli-Egyptian border, after last week's bomb attacks in a Jerusalem market which killed 15 people.

"I asked them for a quick solution to the present situation and the next step will be to move forward the peace process. The present situation may help much more terrorism. This is our fear," he said.

"Punishing the Palestinian people, no food, no medicine is very dangerous and may have very negative reactions," warned Mr. Mubarak. He also announced that Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa would visit Israel on an undisclosed date "to pursue the discussions."

Mr. Levy said that Israeli authorities had handed Mr. Arafat a list bearing the names of 110 militants "whom Israel considers human bombs," and demanded their arrest.

3 civilians killed in Israeli air raids on Lebanon

RASHAYA, Lebanon (AFP)

— Two elderly Lebanese shepherds were killed Tuesday and four civilians wounded in Israeli air strikes against Hizbollah targets in south Lebanon while another man was blown apart by a roadside bomb.

A militiaman from the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) was also wounded in an attack by the Iranian-backed Hizbollah on Israel's self-declared "security zone" in south Lebanon.

Israeli fighter-bombers staged two separate raids on suspected Hizbollah positions in the Syrian-controlled western Bekaa Valley in southeast Lebanon, killing two elderly Lebanese shepherds and wounding four others.

Two Israeli jets fired seven missiles at 10:20 a.m. while four other warplanes flew high above to cover them. Less than two hours later, Israeli bombers returned and fired two missiles near the village of Yohmor, also in the western Bekaa Valley, police added.

The aircraft returned undamaged after having struck their targets," an

(Continued on page 7)

Israel demolishes another Palestinian home in Hebron

HEBRON (AFP) — Israeli army bulldozers demolished a Palestinian home near Hebron Tuesday in the third day of a renewed drive to destroy Arab houses built without Israeli authorisation, officials said.

A large force of soldiers descended on the two-storey home on the outskirts of Hebron early Tuesday and held back about 30 Palestinian protesters while the bulldozer tore down the structure, witnesses said.

A family of five had been living for the past 18 months in the house, located near a newly built road leading to the nearby Jewish settlement of Kyriat Arba, its owner Faid Jaradat told Agency France Presse.

It was the fifth Palestinian home destroyed by Israel since Sunday after a pause of several months in such demolitions.

"I have no where else to go now. I saved and borrowed for 10 years to build this home, spent \$40,000 on it and now it's gone," said Mr. Jaradat, 28, a construction worker who has unemployed for the past few months.

Mr. Jaradat said he had received a demolition warning a year ago and has raised a court case to stop the destruction of his home, which stood several hundred metres away from a bypass road used by Jewish settlers.

Palestinian officials charged that the renewed drive was part of wide-scale sanctions being imposed by Israel following a double

suicide bombing last week in Jerusalem which killed 15 people and wounded 150.

Israeli officials said the demolitions were routine application of Israeli law, targeting homes built without proper authorisation.

Israeli occupation authorities rarely grant construction permits to Arabs, forcing them to break Israeli law as the need for new housing grows.

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Lebanon prosecutor says MP wants rebellion

BEIRUT (R) — A Beirut prosecutor has accused opposition Member of Parliament Najah Wakim of advocating armed rebellion and slandering Lebanese President Elias Hrawi.

The rebellion charge carries up to 10 years imprisonment while slandering offences carry up to three years. A senior judicial source said Mr. Wakim would be summoned for questioning by Beirut magistrate Fouad Geagea on Tuesday.

The senior official, who asked not to be identified, said on Monday the charges filed by Prosecutor Jihad Al Wadi against Mr. Wakim included "calling for armed civil disobedience, humiliating the judiciary and slandering the president."

Mr. Wakim defended himself at a news conference in his Beirut home. "I did not call for an armed rebellion. I called for confronting the authorities with all possible peaceful means."

Beirut newspapers had quoted Mr. Wakim as saying in the eastern town of Baalbek on Sunday. "We are making the necessary arrangements to expand civil disobedience to cover the whole of Lebanon."

He spoke at a rally called by Sheikh Sobhi Al Tufaili, former secretary general of the Hizbollah, who last month declared a civil disobedience campaign in the impoverished Baalbek-Hermel region.

On July 4, Sheikh Tufaili urged residents to refuse to pay utility bills and taxes to pressure the government to tackle poverty in the area, which is suffering economically from a crackdown on illegal drug crops.

The 53-year-old Greek Orthodox politician is one of the liveliest critics of the Lebanon's political establishment. He was re-elected for a four-year term in last year's parliamentary elections.

Jerusalem suicide bombing not terrorism — PLO official

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official defended the deadly twin suicide bombing in Jerusalem last week, saying poverty and despair were to blame for the operation, in remarks published Tuesday.

Farouq Qaddumi, a Fatah member who acts as the foreign minister of the PLO, also said it was time for the Palestinian leadership to quit the autonomous areas to intensify the struggle against Israel.

"The operation in which two young men fell martyrs is a clear evidence that the youth inside the occupied Palestinian territories have reached a stage of despair where death has become a means of salvation for them," Mr. Qaddumi was quoted as saying in the United Arab Emirates daily Al Khaleej.

"The U.S. and Israel must look deeply at such acts and not as terrorist actions as they claim. They should seriously consider the deteriorating conditions of the Palestinians as a result of continuous siege, provocations and actions against Palestinian dignity."

Israel has not yet identified the two suspected Arabs who carried the suicide attack that killed 13 Israeli civilians and injured more than 100 in west Jerusalem's market Wednesday.

The attack, the worst since Benjamin Netanyahu took power more than a year ago, prompted the prime minister to suspend peace negotiations with Palestinians and order the closure of the self-rule areas.

"The Palestinian youth should not be blamed if they carried out such acts. We should not think of the action itself but of the motives that led to it," said Mr. Qaddumi, who is based in Tunis.

"If this situation continues, then we should expect more than that. The Palestinian people could embark on a sweeping uprising against such worsening conditions and the whole world should realise this."

Mr. Qaddumi, who has often criticised the 1993 Oslo autonomy accords between Israel and Palestinians, urged Mr. Arafat and his PNA's executive committee to leave the self-rule areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"The departure of the executive committee from those areas has become necessary because the siege is affecting its responsibility and capability."

"The Palestinian leadership should remain inside the battle as the leadership is normally present away from battles so it can monitor, plan and issue orders in the right time," he said.



Khitam Jaradat, wife of Palestinian Faed Jaradat, screams as she stands at the ruins of her home that has just been demolished by Israeli security forces Tuesday. The Israeli Civil Administration said that Jaradat had built the two-storey home without legal permits. The home was built near a bypass road leading to the Jewish settlement of Kiryat Arba, outside the city of Hebron, in an area that is still under Israeli control. Two additional Palestinian homes are due to be demolished in the area (see story on page 1) (Reuters photo)

Hizbollah mourns fighters killed in Israeli raid

NABATIYEH, Lebanon (R) — Hizbollah fighters Tuesday carried the coffins of comrades killed in clashes with Israeli forces in a funeral procession attended by several thousand in the south Lebanon town of Nabatiyeh.

The roar of Israeli planes could be heard overhead as the crowd yelled "death to Israel" and "America victory to Islam."

Five Hizbollah guerrillas were killed Monday by roadside bombs planted by Israeli commandos after clashes in south Lebanon.

Four were to be buried in their villages near Nabatiyeh. A separate funeral was to be held later in the day in Beirut for the fifth.

Four Israeli planes were rocketing Hizbollah targets in the hills of Libbaya-Yohmour in the southeastern Bekaa Valley, north of Israel's south Lebanon occupation zone, Lebanese security sources said.

There was no immediate word on casualties in the air assault, the 48th into Lebanon since the beginning of the year.

Earlier, Hizbollah guerrillas fired mortar bombs into the South Lebanon Army outpost of Ahmadiyah in the eastern sector of the zone facing the hills, lightly wounding a pro-Israeli militiaman.

Elderly women wailed as a Hizbollah member reported the guerrilla operation over a loud speaker.

Pro-Iranian Hizbollah guerrillas fight Israeli troops and their local militia allies in a bid to oust them from the 15-kilometre wide occupation zone.

Lockerbie victims' families visit Libya for talks on crash

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Families of victims of the 1988 bombing of a Pan-Am jet over Lockerbie in Scotland who are visiting Libya held talks with the country's justice minister Tuesday, officials said.

"Proposals aimed at finding a solution to the Lockerbie affair and to guarantee a fair trial for the two Libyan suspects," were discussed during the meeting with Justice Minister Mohammad Zouai, a Libyan official said.

Libya has been under an air embargo since 1992 over its refusal to hand over to Britain or the U.S. two of its citizens implicated in the Lockerbie tragedy, which killed 270 people on board.

Tripoli has proposed that the two Libyans be tried in a third country "other than the United States or Britain," before the International Court of Justice at the Hague or before a special court.

The U.S. last month denounced a letter from Libya's U.N. mission to U.S. families of the victims, saying it was a callous effort "to prey on the emotions of the families in an attempt to undercut our will to see that justice is served."

Gulf official sees no threats from Iran

MANAMA (R) — Iran did not pose a threat to its Gulf Arab neighbours, a senior Gulf official was Tuesday quoted as saying.

"I can't say there is a danger coming out of Iran. I don't believe in this (danger)," Jameel Al Hujailan, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), told the London-based Ashraq Al Awsat newspaper.

Relations between the GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — are often tense. The six states had voiced concern over Iran's armament programme and accused it of interfering in their internal affairs.

But Iran has recently taken moves towards improving its ties with its neighbours. Hopes for better relations between non-Arab Iran and the GCC have risen after the election of President Mohammad Khatami, seen as a moderate.

"Iran knows well its interests in the region. It is a big neighbouring country and we are fully anxious in maintaining good relations based on good intentions," Mr. Hujailan said. "It's impossible for me to say that Iran forms a danger for the GCC."

Mr. Hujailan said the GCC states did not want relations between Iran and the United States to remain strained because that had negative impacts on the stability of the Gulf region.

"We want our region to be safe, far from international struggles," he said. "Iran is a big and strong neighbour. Iran represents a major factor behind stability in the region. Agreeing with Iran and deepening its conviction on the need to cooperation with the GCC is important to stability in the region," he added.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli tourists complain of mistreatment

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A group of Arab Israeli tourists accused Egyptian authorities Tuesday of mistreatment after they were injured in a bus accident in Egypt which left one woman dead. The woman was killed and 24 of the Israelis wounded, two seriously, when their minibus crashed Monday near the Suez Canal. The travellers complained in a series of radio interviews that their repatriation to Israeli hospitals following the accident was held up for hours at the Egyptian border crossing of Rafah because three of the tourists had lost their passports in the crash. "It is possible that this was all due to bureaucratic foolishness, but I cannot understand the inhuman treatment of these tourists at the border," said Rafiq Yahya, mayor of the tourists' home town of Taibeh.

UAE police seize 14 Iranian illegal immigrants

ABU DHABI (AFP) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) police have seized 14 Iranians who tried to enter the oil-rich Gulf country illegally, newspapers reported Tuesday. The 14 were captured after a large police force raided their hideout in the mountains near the Emirate of Sharjah Sunday, they said. "They were seized after a chase that lasted several hours. The 14 had come by sea with the help of another Iranian in the emirate," a police statement said. The UAE has tightened security along its borders and coastline to curb infiltrations by foreigners seeking jobs. Nearly 200,000 illegal aliens, mostly Asians, left the UAE in 1996 after they were given an amnesty during which they could leave the country. The move preceded the enforcement of stiffer penalties against illegal migrants. Police records show more than 25,000 foreigners, mainly from India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, have been seized over the past two decades while trying to sneak into the UAE.

Three Asians arrested in Qatar for drug smuggling

DOHA (AFP) — Three Asian drug smugglers have been arrested in Qatar in possession of 40 kilograms of hashish, the Interior Ministry announced on Tuesday. The ministry, quoted by the official news agency QNA, said the suspects were caught as they sold part of the hoard. The rest was found during a search of their home. The nationality of the Asians was not given nor the date of their arrest. The emirate, like other Gulf Arab states, imposes the death penalty for convicted drug traffickers. Several Asian smuggling gangs have been busted in the past month.

Tehran 'vampire' sentenced to hang in public

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian cab driver who raped and murdered female passengers in the Tehran area has been sentenced to hang in public, the local press reported Tuesday. Gholam Reza Khoshrou Kuran Kordieh, 28, dubbed the "Vampire of Tehran," had reportedly admitted murdering eight women. His death sentence must be upheld by the supreme court before it can be carried out.

BAPCO announces \$54m upgrade

MANAMA (AFP) — The Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO) refinery will carry out a \$54 million upgrade project within 30 months, Bahrain's Oil and Industry Minister Issa Ben Ali al Khalifa said Tuesday. The refinery will be kept out with a new blending system for gasoline, diesel and fuel oil, allowing for a better production versatility. Mr. Khalifa, who is also BAPCO's chairman was quoted as saying by the local Gulf News Agency. The 250,000 barrel-per-day refinery will be able "to respond immediately to the market's needs, bringing down the amount of stocks and the cost of reservoir maintenance," he added. Mr. Khalifa estimated at \$18 million the annual saving to be achieved by the upgrade. BAPCO's biggest since 1983. The refinery is the oldest in the Arab part of the Gulf, built in 1936 by the two U.S. majors that struck oil four years earlier in the small emirate, Texaco and Standard Oil of California, which became Chevron. The Bahraini government became the refinery's sole owner last April, taking over the 40 per cent stake held by Caltech, a Chevron-Texaco joint venture. Bahrain is the only Gulf Arab monarchy to export only refined products as its oil fields are depleting. Nearly 80 per cent of BAPCO's feedstock is piped from Saudi Arabia.

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PROGRAMME TWO

14:10Cartoons
15:00Global Gander
15:30Spell Binder
16:00Monsters Today
16:30Brown Town
17:00French Programmes
19:00News in French
19:30News Headlines
19:35Neighbours
20:00Soldier's Diary
20:30Oraph Winfrey Show
21:10Spencer For Hire
22:00News in English
22:30Land's End
23:15American Gothic

PRAYER TIMES

04:22Fajr
05:49Sunrise/Duha
12:41Dhuhr
16:22Asr
19:34Maghreb
21:01Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifich, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terza Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Armenian Orthodox Church

Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 5516245
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology. Fine weather conditions will prevail with clouds appearing at low altitudes and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman17/28
Aqaba24/37
Deserts17/32
Jordan Valley23/37

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 28, Aqaba 37 Humidity readings: Amman 52 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Issam Asmar890504
Dr. Yusef Naser751144
Dr. Khalid Klob816715
Dr. Nidal As'ad751672
Firas pharmacy661912
Ferdous pharmacy890280
Al Asema pharmacy637055
Al Salam pharmacy636730
Yacoub pharmacy644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy623672
Najib pharmacy847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir276852
Al Quds pharmacyA—
ZARQA:
Dr. Hafez Salafi914144
Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade617101
Blood Bank75121
Highway Police843402
Traffic Police896390
Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints605800

Price Complaints661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints897467
Amman Municipality Complaints787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)121
Overseas Calls010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television773111
Radio Jordan774111
Water Authority680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir,775111/26

Army, Marka891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)96732
Al-Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08

(52700) or 08(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:05Damascus (RJ)
09:25 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:30Jeddah (RJ)
10:15Laraca (RJ)
10:45Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:55 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30Madrid (RJ)
17:40Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
18:05Paris (RJ)
18:40Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
19:05Rome (RJ)
19:10Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
19:10London, Berlin (RJ)
20:00Tunis (RJ)
20:40Rome (RJ)
00:15Beirut (RJ)
00:40Istanbul (RJ)
01:05Cairo (RJ)
04:25 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

Other Flights

09:15 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
11:00Sanaa, Hudaiddah (IY)
11:50Kuwait (KU)
12:00Jeddah (SV)
13:10 Doha, Abu Dhabi (GF)
13:15Cairo (MS)
13:50Tel Aviv (LY)
14:30Tunis (TF)
14:30Al-Arish (PF)
15:05Vienna (OS)
16:20Algiers (AH)

16:30Dubai (EK)

17:00Doha (QR)

19:30Istanbul, Damascus (PK)

20:40London (GA)

21:10Beirut (ME)

21:10Paris, Damascus (AF)

23:20Istanbul (TK)

23:25Amsterdam (KL)

23:30Athens (OA)

05:15Ankara (TK)

07:50Amsterdam (GA)

17:30Madrid (RJ)

17:40Toronto, Montreal (RJ)

18:05Paris (RJ)

18:40Brussels, Geneva (RJ)

19:05Rome (RJ)

19:10Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

19:10London, Berlin (RJ)

20:00Tunis (RJ)

20:40Rome (RJ)

00:15Beirut (RJ)

00:40Istanbul (RJ)

01:05Cairo (RJ)

04:25 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

21:15 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)

21:50Bombay (RJ)

22:05Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

23:00Bahrain (RJ)

02:30Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

06:50Larnaca (CY)
08:45Beirut (ME)
08:50Amsterdam (GA)
09:25London (BA)
10:00 Damascus, Istanbul (PK)
12:00Hudaiddah, Sanaa (IY)
12:50Kuwait (KU)
13:30Jeddah (SV)
14:00Bahrain, Muscat (GF)
14:15Cairo (MS)
15:10Tel Aviv (LY)
15:30Tunis (TU)
15:30Al-Arish (PF)
15:50Vienna (OS)
17:20Sharigah (AH)
17:45Dubai (EK)
17:50Doha (QR)
20:15 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)
21:40Dampasir (GA)
23:55Damascus, Paris (AF)
00:25 Damascus, Amsterdam (KL)
00:25Ankara (TK)
04:00Athens (OA)
06:15Istanbul (TK)

DEPARTURES

07:00Larnaca (RJ)
10:50Rome (RJ)
11:45 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:45Berlin, London (RJ)
12:00Tunis (add) (RJ)
12:30Rome (add) (RJ)
19:15Istanbul (RJ)
20:10Colombo (RJ)
20:35Beirut (RJ)
21:00New Delhi (RJ)
21:10Cairo (RJ)
21:10Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)

Royal Wings (RW)
07:45Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
09:15Aqaba (RW)
10:30Amman (QAIA) (RW)
17:45Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
18:55Tel Aviv (RW)
21:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
22:50Aqaba (RW)

The Public Administration (IPA) and the Libyan National Police (LNP) have signed an agreement to develop administrative cooperation between the two sides.

The terms of the agreement, the two sides said, will be published in the near future.

The agreement provides for the exchange of information and the sharing of experiences in administrative management.

The IPA and the LNP will also cooperate in the field of training and the exchange of personnel.

The IPA is planning to send a delegation to Libya to study the LNP's administrative system.

NEWS IN B

ness voted council vic

The Council of Ministers has approved the appointment of a vice minister for the Ministry of the Interior.

The appointment is for a period of one year and will be subject to the approval of the Council of Ministers.

The vice minister will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Ministry of the Interior.

The appointment is a move to strengthen the Ministry of the Interior and to ensure the smooth running of its affairs.

WHAT'S GO ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

Organized by the New York Broadway Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

Performance by the Egyptian Tabbal and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

Performance by the students of the Arab Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.

Local performance by Jordanian artists at the main square.

Display of handicrafts and sculpture.

FILM

COLLOQUIUM

EXHIBITIONS

IPA, Libyan organisation sign agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) and the Libyan National Public Administration Tuesday signed an agreement on administrative development cooperation.

Under the terms of the agreement, the two sides will exchange information, data and publications covering activities and programmes.

The agreement provides for the two sides to design human resource training programmes in administrative and financial matters, covering the needs of both public and private sector organisations.

It also stipulates that the two sides interchange visiting lecturers, instructors and experts on the implementation of training programmes.

They are planning to organise joint seminars and prepare and design joint research plans.

Each institute will assign a number of seats for trainees from the other



IPA Director General Zuhair Kayed and Mohammad Mantasser, from the Libyan institute, Tuesday sign an accord on administrative development affairs cooperation (Petra photo)

in order to pay reduced tuition fees.

IPA Director General Zuhair Kayed and Mohammad Mantasser, from the Libyan institute, signed the accord.

Following the agreement's ratification, Mr. Mantasser met with IPA President Abdullah Ulayyan and the two discussed cooperation in public administration.

Mr. Mantasser expressed his country's desire to benefit from Jordan's expertise in setting job descriptions and administrative personnel and salary scales.

Premier briefs Cabinet on recent visits abroad

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Tuesday held a regular session under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

The premier briefed the ministers on the outcome of meetings held Monday and Tuesday between His Majesty King Hussein and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

These, he said, focused on the current situation in Palestine as well as recent Israeli measures such as sealing off of the Palestinian self-rule areas, the difficult conditions of the Palestinian people resulting from the continued closure of their territories, and regional danger stemming from two suicide bomb attacks in West Jerusalem.

The following are the contents of the meeting as reported by Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawiq:

The prime minister briefed the Cabinet on the outcome of his visit to Malaysia in which he deputised for HRH Crown Prince Hassan in an international economic conference.

The prime minister held auxiliary meetings with Malaysian officials regarding economic, trade, tourist, labour and civil aviation cooperation.

Dr. Majali then visited the United Arab Emirates in which place he discussed matters pertaining to investments with the Abu Dhabi Investment Fund.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Fayez Tarawneh submitted

two reports, the first of which covered the opening of a Jordanian embassy in Malaysia, in October of this year, as well as a second on coordination with the Malaysian foreign minister regarding preparations for a Jordanian-Malaysian business council meeting.

Prince Hassan is expected to visit Malaysia and Brunei at a future, as yet undetermined, date.

Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Bassam Saket described the outcome of a World Bank delegation's visit to Jordan which detailed issues related to the restructuring of the national air carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ).

Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin reported on the outcome of his recent visit to Germany and talks at the German Reconstruction and Development Bank on financing water projects. These, he said, are slated to include the replacement of the Amman water network.

The Cabinet formed Jordan's delegation to attend a seminar on reforming civil service in a manner supportive of the private sector.

The seminar is due to be held in Cairo at the end of August.

The Council of Ministers also formed a Jordanian delegation from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to participate in an international conference on water resources, due to be held in Montreal, Canada, in September.

Guest workers still stranded by penalties

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government is continuing efforts to stabilise its foreign work force by granting extended grace periods and amnesties on dated visas and work permits for some foreign labourers.

The last such measure was taken in March, after an official visit from the then Minister of Labour Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Cairo during which arrangements were ratified during talks with Egyptian officials.

Egyptians unlawfully working in the Kingdom were given a three-month grace period to legalise their status or return home — the grace period was later extended to Aug. 9.

In the last few years, the government, Ministry of Interior and various police departments have ratified and enforced different legislation to exempt foreign workers in Jordan from penalties for exceeding their permitted time limit.

These penalties are generally tabulated at JD 1 per day subsequent to the legal residency limit.

Guest workers in Jordan are currently estimated at 300,000 today, officials in the Ministry of Labour said.

While Egyptians and Syrians are currently exempted from paying any overstay penalties, the less fortunate are facing increasingly difficult situations.

According to Director of

the Ministry of Labour Workforce Affairs Department Mohammed Al Akel, 90 per cent of all foreign workers in Jordan are Egyptians, the rest are comprised of workers from Pakistan, China, India, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Turkey.

Mr. Shakhaneh told the Jordan Times that current records describe the Kingdom as employing approximately 25,000 workers from East Asia, of which, according to officials at the Ministry of Labour, 15,000 are from Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

Maria Wiga, 42, a Sri Lanka national married to a Sudanese and with no legal residency papers is an example.

Previously, in the Kingdom, she worked as a maid and terminated her work contract after entering her ninth month of pregnancy.

Her family wishes to leave Jordan but are stymied by penalties they have no means of paying.

Public Security Department (PSD) and Department of Foreign Residency officials expressed their willingness to help foreign workers with such problems.

A PSD official told the Jordan Times that the department does deal with such cases and considers some as "humanitarian."

The procedure is initiated by submitting an application for an exemption to the PSD which is then conveyed to the Ministry of Interior. The official said.

Many pardons for similar cases have been obtained, he added.

The minister of interior has the authority to reduce an overstay penalty by JD 200, a ministry official explained.

Any Lee Coronado and her daughter, Jorgina C. Farouk, represent another case.

Ms. Coronado was five months pregnant when her Ghanaian husband abandoned her.

The Consulate of the Philippines in 1995 requested help from the Ministry of Interior but, apparently, never received a reply.

Filipino friends formed a charity to gather money to buy a ticket home for the child that she might live with her grandparents and study.

The penalties are the only obstacle which stand in the child's way.

Work permits are generally provided by the employer and problems occur when the work visa expires and a given employee decides to stay in the country.

Mr. Shakhaneh said. He was sceptical of the efficacy of grace periods, however, due to the perennial problem of workers overstaying the time limit extended to them.

"Giving valid work permits and facilitating their renewal may be a solution," he said.

A Ministry of Labour official affirmed that the government will now strictly apply the law and request that guest workers, without possession of a valid work permit, leave

the country and pay both requisite exit fees and any other fines which they may have incurred.

The government has only exempted Egyptians, Syrians and few other Arab nationals from paying these penalties.

Ministry of Labour officials declined comment on cases of foreign workers not included in the grace periods and amnesties.

In 1996, work permits issued to foreign workers amounted to less than half of those issued in 1995, according to the ministry.

Last year 42,976 work permits were issued to foreign workers, down from 94,333 in 1995, in compliance with measures announced by the Cabinet last year to reduce the number of guest workers in the Kingdom.

The Ministry of Labour agreed that a foreign worker seeking employment in Jordan should acquire a work contract, approved by the ministry, before entering the country, in accordance with the law on residency.

Police departments in the country will begin to keep records of all foreigners living in the Kingdom and ask all employers of guest workers to report their names to authorities and inform the station when the labourers leave their place of employment.

The Ministry of Labour last year urged swift action by the government and Parliament to enact new labour laws in order to improve worker conditions.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess voted council vice-president

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Paris-based International Council for Philosophy and Humanities unanimously elected HRH Princess Wijdan Ali Bint Nayef as vice-president of the Council in appreciation of her work in cultural cooperation, according to an Institute of Diplomacy statement.

Soldiers leave for Bosnia

AMMAN (Petra) — A new group of public security officers and soldiers Tuesday left for Bosnia to join the U.N. peace keeping forces there. Assistant Director of the Public Security Department Maj. Gen. Ahmad Dmour called on the departing force to be exemplary in self-discipline and good manners, and to discharge their duties as efficiently as possible.

Regional expert to give discourse

AMMAN (J.T.) — Dr. Mary Morris of RAND Corporation will be a guest speaker at the World Affairs Council Aug. 7 at 6 p.m. The topic will be "A new perspective for Washington's Middle East policy." Dr. Morris, a Middle East expert, will be dealing with recent developments in Jerusalem, the logjam in the peace process, and the repercussions on Jordan and the region.

WHAT'S GOING ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

* Concert by the New York Broadway Duo at the North Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

* Young Dance Show at Artemis Steps at 8:30 p.m.

* Concert by Iraqi artist Kazem Al-Sahir at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

* Performance by the Egyptian Tamboura Band at the Sound and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

* Ballet dance by the students of the Ahliyyeh School for Girls at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

* Poetry recitals and musical performance at Gracia Theatre at 8:00 p.m.

* Musical performance by Jordanian bands and an Egyptian circus show at the main square at 7:00 p.m.

* Display of handicrafts and sculptures at Zeus vault.

FILM

* Children's film "Loch Ness" at the British Council at 5:00 p.m.

COLLOQUIUM

* Colloquium on "Inter-religious and Inter-cultural Relations in Israel in Light of the Peace Process" by Rabbi Dr. Ronald Krumpholtz (Director of Inter-religious Coordinating Council in Israel) and on "The Role of Inter-faith Dialogue in Peace Building" by (respondent) Mr. Ali Kassay (Associate of the Royal Institute of Inter-faith Studies) at the Royal Institute of Inter-faith Studies, Jafar Amman, Fourth Circle at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Photography exhibition by Claudia Pedoni at the Jordan Arts and Crafts Centre/Artisans, Jafar Amman, Second Circle. (Tel. 647858) until Aug. 18.

* Middle East Exhibition of Plastic and Rubber Industries at the Amman International Exhibit, Marj Al-Hamra, until Aug. 7.

* Sculpture exhibition by Ibrahim Dayyat at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 7.

'Bilateral agreements to alleviate unemployment'

MUTA (Petra) — The Ministry of Labour is addressing unemployment in Jordan through bilateral agreements with other Arab states, according to Ministry Secretary General Saleh Tarawneh.

These stipulate the employment of Jordanian workers as well as the organisation of the local labour market in Jordan, he said.

In a lecture at Muta University, Mr. Tarawneh attributed the current rate of unemployment in Jordan to an increase in students graduating from educational institutions, the number of foreign workers employed in the Kingdom, the natural rise in the national birth rate, migrations from rural to urban areas as well as political circumstances which forced thousands of Jordanians to leave the Gulf and return to Jordan.

The secretary general did not specify exact figures of unemployed workers in Jordan, however unofficial estimates calculate the number between 15 and 20 per cent of the total work force.

"Jordanians are unemployed either because jobs do not exist, because their qualifications do not conform to jobs available or because they do not wish to undertake manual job posts currently filled by foreign workers."

According to Mr. Tarawneh, a minimum of 275,000 Jordanians currently work abroad while approximately 250,000 foreigners work in the Kingdom, many of whom do so illegally.

The Ministry of Labour is currently intensifying inspections of various institutions and firms to ensure that foreign workers hold valid work permits, he stated.

It is also enforcing regulations which ban foreigners from working in various occupations, Mr. Tarawneh affirmed.

Such regulations have been circulated to various organisations, and the ministry is seeking work for Jordanians abroad, he added.

In addition, the government is trying to secure loans for heads of families from the Industrial Development Bank, the Agricultural Credit Corporation, the Employment and Development Fund, and the Social Security Corporation to help establish small businesses after citizens acquire training at Vocational Training Corporation centres, he concluded.

Wadi Musa undergoes face-lift

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

WADI MUSA — A wave of pink-tinted terracotta houses meets the curious eye upon entering the village of Wadi Musa — the gateway to the archaeological site of Petra.

Wadi Musa, a village of some 14,000 inhabitants living in the south of Jordan, has undergone gradual changes during the past two years; the once haphazard technicoloured houses greeting visitors to Petra have now been submerged in coats of pink terracotta tones.

Trees and planters have transformed the once stark and barren landscape into a verdant environment.

In the past, tourists who wanted to take a closer look by walking up and down the village usually ended up not knowing which part of the street to walk on. Rubbish used to litter the streets and during the wet season, soil would erode the roads. All of the above made walking and driving in the village of Wadi Musa quite an unpleasant experience.

Now, however, stone-retaining walls prevent eroded soil from being spilled onto the road. Sidewalks have been constructed thereby decreasing the possibility being trod upon by horses or hit by buses. Benches dispersed around the town provide a moment of respite for the weary walker.

Strolling deeper into Wadi Musa and closer to Petra, planters

become more abundant and pergolas made of stone columns and wooden beams have a pleasing effect on the entrance to Petra.

Since 1995, the Petra Regional Council (PRC), a decentralised government body, working under the umbrella of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, has been working on long and short-term plans for tourism promotion and the protection of Petra.

The PRC is responsible for six major cities and villages within the region covering 1,000 square kilometres of land.

These villages are Wadi Musa, El Taybeh, Al Rajef, El Beidha, Dlagha, and 'Um Saihoun'. Wadi Musa is the major city within the PRC.

There are many short and long-term strategies for the physical upgrading of this area," said PRC Director General Dr. Kamel Mahadin.

Short-term plans for Wadi Musa focus on a clean-up of the town to be financed by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

"We (the PRC) have started by cleaning up and building some retaining walls and dry stone walls," Dr. Mahadin affirmed. "We have also been embarking on some [renovation] from 'Ain Musa down the four kilometre spine to the Visitors' Centre."

According to Dr. Mahadin, the PRC has just concluded a landscaping project facing the Visitor's Centre. This project entails constructing a 'one-kilometre stretch of sidewalks, benches, and arbours."

Approximately 8,000 trees, vines and poplars have been planted along the streets. The regeneration of the Wadi Musa forests is another major project. There are around 600 dunams of farmland for olive groves planted by locals with JD 2 million allocated for building proper water channels, reconstructing dry-stone walls and other related projects, according to Dr. Mahadin.

Another short-term strategy for Wadi Musa includes posting proper signs, directing tourists to various places. Also, the Visitor's Centre is now open until 11 o'clock at night. A professional is present there to help visitors with any queries they may have.

An exhibition hall is housed in this centre. It shows the major excavations taking place at Petra and the major hotels there.

Most of the hotels and tourist services are situated at Wadi Musa. In 1992, there were two hotels at Wadi Musa and now 58 hotels are found there, varying from one to five star hotels.

In the past there were those who demonstrated pessimism as to the ability of these hotels to succeed in light of the seasonal tourism Petra receives.

However, Dr. Mahadin told the Jordan Times that "in 1996 Wadi Musa was visited by 440,000 people. The first six months of this year witnessed 200,000 tourists arriving in Wadi Musa."

"We expect this number to increase with the high season in September, October, and November," he added. "In the low sea-

son the hotel occupancy rate is 45 per cent jumping up to 80 per cent during the high season."

He described the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities as presently working on a marketing strategy to increase the number of tourists to Wadi Musa.

Long-term plans include investments of JD 6 million in Wadi Musa by various ministries. During the past two years, the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the Ministry of Youth and Culture, and the Electricity Company have contributed to the upgrading of Wadi Musa.

A \$23 million World Bank loan will be used in the coming three years for upgrading the infrastructure of roads starting with the Desert Highway, then "Unaizeh, Shobak, and Wadi Musa."

The spine running down Wadi Musa will also be improved, and the Elgea village is slated for renovation.

The latter falls under the jurisdiction of the Wadi Musa Municipality and consists of six houses located in the middle of the commercial centre of Wadi Musa. These houses are to be transformed into commercial ventures.

"Within one month, the PRC will tender the souq by the Visitors' Centre. A budget has already been allocated for the rehabilitation of the centre," Dr. Mahadin explained. "We are working towards creating a Petra Park Management unit which will pro-

vide Petra with park rangers." The PRC will receive 25 per cent of the entrance fee to Petra for the maintenance and upgrading of the sanctuary.

Dr. Mahadin maintained that the Petra Priority Action Plan, established in 1996, puts sustainable tourism at the top of its priority list.

"Under the guidelines of this plan, tourism developments should be architecturally-friendly," he stated. "Hence the pink-tinted colouring of the Wadi Musa houses, the renovation and rehabilitation of the Elgea village and the souq, which will blend into the surrounding environment."

He affirmed that each project at Wadi Musa undergo an environmental impact assessment by the PRC.

The archeological site of Petra can receive up to 3,000 visitors a day, and the PRC aims at keeping this number fixed as an increase in capacity could damage the site.

The PRC is concerned with the preservation of Petra itself and Dr. Mahadin told the Jordan Times that there are currently nine excavations taking place at Petra, two of which are considered to be major projects: Archaeologists from Brown University are excavating the Petra Temple near Qasr Al Bint.

A Swiss grant has made it possible to clean up, rediscover and restore the pavement at the Seikh, and reconstruct two dams there, he concluded.

Kinshasa radical opposition accused of planning coup

KINSHASA (AFP) — The Democratic Republic of Congo's deputy-interior minister Tuesday accused the radical opposition of planning to overthrow the government.

General Faustin Munene said in a government radio interview that opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, head of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDSP) party, and Antoine Gisinga, head of the United Lumumbist Party (PALU), were planning "destabilisation acts."

Both Mr. Tshisekedi and Mr. Gisinga were also in the radical opposition against Mobutu Sese Seko, the Zairean dictator overthrown in May by the rebel movement of Laurent Kabila, now the country's president.

"To have relations with

these people or these parties is to have relations with Mobutu," Mr. Munene said, warning against "any attempt at rebellion in the Democratic Republic of Congo."

Mr. Munene said the ruling Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (ADFL) would have no dealings with them, arguing that during "the war of liberation against the Mobutu dictatorship their leaders did not join the armed struggle."

He added: "These people are planning demonstrations and are manipulating young people who loot and kill civilians, making them out to have links with ADFL officials."

"We will take very severe measures and we ask the people to be vigilant," the deputy-interior minister

said. In July, Mr. Kabila issued a similar warning after what he called "the scum of these political manoeuvres" demonstrated in Kinshasa.

Demonstrators from PALU and young supporters of the UDSP held rallies on July 25 calling for the re-establishment of party political activity, which was banned by Mr. Kabila in May along with opposition demonstrations.

They were also calling for the constitution of a national unity government and an end to the violence and insecurity prevailing in the capital.

Mr. Kabila's security forces killed one person and beat and arrested others, according to PALU. The opposition media had initially reported a death toll of from four to seven.

China dusts off liberal rhetoric before congress

BEIJING (R) — China's Communist Party, facing a crucial congress that will set future policies, Tuesday dusted off the rhetoric of its most liberal reform era, saying the nation was in need of bold experimentation.

In a front-page commentary the official party mouthpiece, the People's Daily, called on the party faithful to boldly blaze the trail ahead and not to worry about whether this was in fact a path trodden by capitalists.

"The most important aspect of our national situation is that we are in the primary stage of socialism," said the commentary.

"Only by borrowing from others can we make improvements," it said. "To move forward we can only liberate our thinking and blaze the trail ahead."

The catch-all phrase "primary stage of socialism" has been used to wave away concerns that China was abandoning its Socialist roots and adopting too much of what had been vilified in the past as capitalism.

The phrase was most closely identified with the reformist leader Zhao Ziyang, who was toppled in 1989 in a power struggle that ended with the army's crushing of the student-led pro-democracy movement.

that June.

Mr. Zhao has been under house arrest and out of the public eye since he made a tearful visit on May 19, 1989, to student protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square before the crackdown, urging them to go home and avoid bloodshed.

Mr. Zhao's successor as party chief, Jiang Zemin, has been publicly throwing his weight behind efforts to shake up the lumbering state-run sector, which has been unable to compete with nimble private rivals as China moves further along the road to a market economy and away from Stalinist central planning.

Mr. Jiang and his allies have been edging closer to shutting down hopelessly inefficient companies or selling them off to private industry.

Mr. Jiang, who used the phrase "primary stage of socialism" in an internal speech at the party's main training institute in May, has been saying he wanted a breakthrough this year, leading many analysts to conclude he would seek an endorsement of more privatisation at the party congress, expected in late September or early October.

"China's leaders feel

said a diplomat in Beijing. "And now is a good time to do it."

Other analysts agreed, adding that the Zhaoist phrase would come in handy in fending off opposition from the party's conservative wing.

"This phrase gives you a great deal more flexibility to experiment," said another diplomat.

Party leaders are now holding their annual summer gathering at the seaside resort of Beidaihe, where much of the groundwork for the congress is being done.

"The biggest challenges we face are how to employ greater boldness and resolution in reforming the old system and how to raise to new heights the policy of opening to the outside," the People's Daily said.

The commentary specifically referred to the issue of privatisation, endorsing the actions of some local government companies that had sold off assets to raise funds needed to repay debts.

"In the search for a series of deep and far reaching reforms of the state sector, it is inevitable that people will ask 'is this privatisation?'" the commentary said.

The answer to its own question was to recall that China was still in the primary stage of socialism.

Patten: China hand diplomats not responsible for allegations

LONDON (AFP) — Chris Patten, the former governor of Hong Kong, said Monday he did not believe "China hand" diplomats in the British Foreign Office were behind allegations he had leaked official secrets to a journalist.

"It would be very curious if this was being put into circulation by certain old 'China hands' because all it does is to whip up controversy about events in the 1980s which I think they'd like to see the back of," Mr. Patten told ITN television news.

The former governor, who again dismissed the allegations as "totally without foundation," was referring

to British diplomats in Beijing who fought his bid to strengthen democracy before the colony's return to Chinese rule on July 1.

Mr. Patten also refuted a claim made by Britain's opposition Tory Party — of which he is a member — which said the Labour government was using the controversy to divert media attention from its own troubles. "I hope that wouldn't occur to anyone, to make a ridiculous personal attack like this in order to achieve that objective," he told ITN, speaking from his home in the south of France.

The allegations against Mr. Patten surfaced in last weekend's Sunday Times

newspaper here and are now the subject of an official British inquiry.

The paper claimed Mr. Patten handed secret information to journalist Jonathan Dimbleby, whose authorised biography, "The Last Governor," was published last month with a fly-on-the-wall TV series on Mr. Patten's five years in Hong Kong.

In his book, Mr. Dimbleby says the governor spoke of a gentlemen's agreement between London and Beijing to renege on assurances that Hong Kong's parliament, the Legislative Council, would be directly elected from 1998.

Mr. Patten had expressed sincere regrets and informed Islamabad that it had advised Mr. Horan to retract and issue a public apology.

Mr. Kansil, a native of the mainly tribal southwestern province of Baluchistan bordering Afghanistan and Iran, was captured by agents of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) with the help of Pakistani commandos in a mysterious operation that had itself sparked protests inside the country.

Some politicians accused Mr. Sharif's government of compromising national sovereignty by handing over a Pakistani to a foreign government without meeting legal formalities for extradition.



A nurse in a Phnom Penh hospital attends Tuesday to one of the fourteen people wounded when a grenade exploded following an argument between off-duty soldiers at a night club late Monday. Cambodia is awash with war weapons after decades of conflict and guns and grenades are easily available on the blackmarket (Reuters photo)

Cambodian refugees return home; nightclub blast toll rises

ARANYAPRATHET

More than 3,000 refugees who fled fighting in northwestern Cambodia last week returned home Tuesday after fighting ceased and the government guaranteed their safety, Cambodian officials said.

About 3,360 refugees dismantled their temporary shelters, packed up and walked about three kilometres into Cambodia from Thailand's Nongchan village where they had sought refuge during last week's fighting.

"The situation in our country has returned to normal, there is no fighting in our areas and we have guaranteed safety for these people," Chai Salot, deputy governor of Bantea Meanchey province in northwestern Cambodia, told reporters as he came to escort the refugees home.

Some 6,000 refugees fled fighting in northwestern Cambodia late last week between forces loyal to ousted Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh and strongman Hun Sen.

The refugee flow into Thailand was the first time Cambodians had been allowed across the border since before a 1993 U.N.-sponsored election in Cambodia. Prince Ranariddh and Mr. Hun Sen formed an uneasy coalition after that poll.

Many of the refugees returned on their own after the sound of gunfire ceased. Thai army sources on the border said two refugees who returned Sunday were killed and three others injured after they stepped on a landmine in the jungle.

Sporadic battles have been going on in parts of Cambodia since a bloody July 5-6 power grab by Mr.

Hun Sen in the capital Phnom Penh.

Thai army sources based on the border said the fighting in northwestern Cambodia had stopped in the past few days and troops loyal to Mr. Hun Sen had taken control of the area.

Meanwhile, the number of people wounded in a grenade attack on a Phnom Penh nightclub rose Tuesday to 27, with one woman seriously injured, police and hospital officials said.

"Our latest toll of people hurt in the explosion is 27, with one person badly injured," criminal police Colonel Mok Chito, told AFP. Earlier, police said 14 people were injured.

Six people were still in hospital following the attack late Monday, while the rest had been discharged, officials said.

Three men wearing military uniforms hurled a

grenade into the packed bar on Monday night, according to police.

Col. Mok Chito said it was a petty vengeance attack by a man dressed in military uniform on revellers in the nightclub where punters had been watching a live band.

"We believe the attack was the result of a local argument," he said. "We were told that before it happened, that a soldier had asked some people to toast him with their drinks but they refused. The attack happened after that."

He said nobody had been arrested in connection with the attack, while co-Defence Minister Tea Banh said "anybody could wear a military uniform."

Earlier there had been speculation the blast may have been politically motivated.

Emergency declared in Cambodian province

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — A state of emergency was in force Tuesday in three provinces in troubled Cambodia where flooding hit at least 155,000 people, leaving hundreds homeless and devastating vital crops, officials said.

The government Tuesday declared emergencies in two eastern provinces — Stung Treng and Kampong Cham — after announcing a similar step in Kratie province a day earlier.

"We declared emergencies as we believe we cannot now avoid severe flooding in the three provinces as the water level is increasing fast," said Lim Keang Hor, advisor in charge of meteorology to Second Prime Minister Hun Sen.

"The government has informed the authorities in the provinces to take serious action to rescue flood victims and their possessions and animals," he added.

The mighty Mekong River

is fast approaching "critical" levels in two of the three provinces, relief workers said, following heavy rainstorms spawned by Typhoon Victor which swept across Southeast Asia during the weekend.

The latest disaster was causing chaos and destruction in the country already struggling to come to terms with fierce factional clashes a month ago which saw one of the country's two feuding co-premiers toppled.

"In Kampong Cham, the river is reaching the crucial level at which it will flow right into the province's capital," said Uy Sam Ath of the Cambodian Red Cross.

He said in Kratie alone, 32,200 families comprising 155,600 people had been affected by flooding, while 51,800 of the individuals had been rendered "most vulnerable" by the deluge.

"Already 245 people have been forced to flee with no shelter, while a lot more

people have had to move out but have been accommodated in temples, schools or with relatives," he said.

No information was available for the other two stricken provinces due to communication difficulties, but the relief boss said the three provinces usually flooded to similar degrees.

"Perhaps more worrying in the longer term is that people will suffer from food shortages in August and September as they usually survive on their harvests but the rising waters have destroyed their production," he said.

More than 8,000 hectares (19,700 acres) of rice and red corn crops and seedlings had already been destroyed in Kratie as the harvest season approaches.

Emergency rice supplies had earlier been distributed by local relief agencies to Stung Treng and Kampong Cham, he said, giving locals there a buffer against immediate shortages.

He said figures released by the Meteorological Department showed the water level of the Mekong had risen by 0.34 metres overnight in Kratie province, and was only 0.20 metres from the critical level in Kampong Cham and 0.50 metres short in Stung Treng.

Relief workers said the provincial Red Cross was supplying plastic sheeting for shelter to the homeless, bedding, dry clothes and cooking equipment.

But relief workers said that despite the problems, the annual flooding was not the worst to hit the area in recent years, although they warned this could be "a bad year."

"I just hope the weather clears up and that the flow of the Mekong slows enough to give these people a chance to rescue their lives," an aid worker said.

Chechens: Russia owes billions for war damages

MOSCOW (R) — Chechen officials Monday put the damage sustained by their breakaway region during its 21-month conflict with Russian troops at 1,500 trillion Roubles, Interfax news agency said.

First deputy Prime Minister Musa Doshukayev said the sum included physical and moral damage to Chechnya's population and environment, and was based on criteria used by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

"Nearly half of the total sum represents moral damages but Chechnya will not insist that they be repaid if it

is felt that we are being compensated for the material losses," Interfax quoted Mr. Doshukayev as saying.

"We have thoroughly studied the Russian constitution and are convinced that by its actions in Chechnya the leadership of the Russian federation broke 11 statutes concerning human rights," he added.

Tens of thousands of people died during the Chechen 1994-96 war, which pitted separatist guerrillas against the Russian army. Chechnya's economy and infrastructure remain devastated, despite the signing of a peace pact last August.

That agreement formally

set aside the question of Chechnya's sovereignty for a five-year period, but the territory's separatist leaders regard their region as already independent.

As part of the peace deal, the Kremlin pledged to plough funds into Chechnya to rebuild its shattered economy, but money has been slow in coming.

Also Monday, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin met Security Council Secretary Ivan Rybkin to discuss the situation in Chechnya, especially financial questions, Interfax reported.

It quoted Mr. Rybkin as saying Chechen officials

would come to Moscow on Aug. 5 to work out details of a planned meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov.

Last week Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov suspended his ministers' talks with Moscow in a bid to speed up the release of Russian funds.

The move may delay negotiations on renovating a pipeline intended to carry oil from new Azeri offshore fields to world markets through Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiisk later this year.

Indonesia buys Russian planes, choppers

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia announced Tuesday it would buy Russian jets and helicopters after cancelling a deal to purchase U.S. F-16 fighters over congressional attacks on its human rights record.

State Planning Minister

Ginanjjar Kartasasmita told a news conference Indonesia would buy 12 Sukhoi SU-30K fighters and eight MI-17-1V helicopters.

He said the decision was "based on a study and comparison of various helicopters and fighter planes."

The minister added that ideally Indonesia wanted to buy 20 fighters.

"But for the first phase, we decided on eight helicopters and 12 fighter planes. There is a possibility we can buy more in future from Russia," he said.

In June, Indonesia, angered by U.S. congressional criticism of its human rights record, cancelled a deal to buy nine U.S. F-16 jets. The government also pulled out of a U.S. military education and training programme.

Cuba say U.S. behind hotel bomb

HAVANA (R) — Cuba said Monday that people from the United States were behind a small bomb explosion in the lobby of a Havana hotel earlier in the day that it termed a "terrorist action."

The Cuban news agency, Prensa Latina quoted an Interior Ministry statement as saying that an explosion at the Melia Cohiba Hotel at around 7 a.m. (1100 GMT) Monday was caused by a small explosive device.

The statement, issued late in the evening, said the bomb caused some material damage and no injuries.

Prensa Latina quoted the statement as saying the characteristics of Monday's bomb were similar to those of two small bombs that exploded July 12 in the lobbies of two other Havana hotels, causing damage and slightly injuring three people.

"These terrorist actions are encouraged, organised and supplied, both in material and in personnel, from U.S. territory," Prensa Latina quoted the statement as saying.

Following the July 12 bombs at Havana's Nacional and Capri hotels, the Interior Ministry issued a brief statement saying it had evidence that the people responsible and the material used in those attacks were from the United States.

Authorities have given no other details, but it appears they suspect hardline Cuban exile opponents of President Fidel Castro's Communist government living in the United States.

The State Department has said Cuba should produce the evidence it has, or stop making the charge that people from the United States were involved.

Monday's bomb at the Melia Cohiba, which is owned by the Cuban state firm Cubanacan and managed by Spanish hotel group Sol Melia, appeared to have been placed in a corner of the hotel's lobby.

Authorities prevented non-guests from entering the hotel and quickly threw up a wooden partition around the affected area, so it was not possible to look at the damage behind.

However a foreign guest at the hotel who saw the lobby minutes after the explosion told reporters that he had seen damage to furnishings such as potted plants.

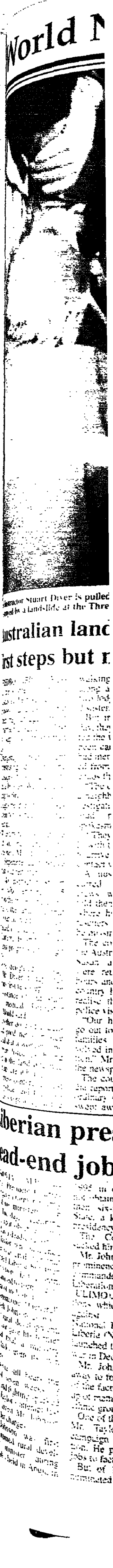
The Palma De Mallorca, Spain-based Sol Melia group issued a brief statement Monday afternoon saying an explosion had caused slight material damage. It noted the hotel was functioning normally and was currently full.

The Melia Cohiba, Havana's top hotel and situated on the Malecon sea-front drive in Vedado district, was also the alleged target of a small bomb in mid-April.

U.S. media reported that a bomb went off during the night in the hotel discotheque, causing damage but no injuries. Cuban authorities never confirmed that reported bomb. Officials from Sol Melia said at the time that there had been an explosion but that this was caused by faulty gas piping.

The spate of hotel bombings, while they have so far caused only three slight injuries and some material damage, are bound to be worrying for Cuba as it seeks to develop tourism and foster an image as a safe and orderly place to visit.

Tourism is a leading source of foreign exchange for the Caribbean island as it seeks to emerge from economic crisis caused by the demise of the former Soviet Union. Violent crime involving firearms or explosives is very rare on the island.





Ski instructor Stuart Diver is pulled from the wreckage of two Australian ski lodges destroyed by a landslide at the Thredbo Alpine Village, August 2 (Reuters photo)

Australian landslide survivor takes first steps but no more found

THREDBO (AFP) — Rescue crews drew a blank Tuesday in their search for survivors of a landslide but a man they dragged from the rubble managed his first few steps on frostbitten toes.

Emergency workers spent a frustrating day in the wreckage of two lodges torn from a hillside Wednesday, failing to find any more of the eight people still unaccounted for as bad weather closed in.

"My estimation is that we could still be here until maybe next Monday, Tuesday," Superintendent Steve Hyman told reporters.

But ski instructor Stuart Diver, who endured 65 hours in the frozen mud and rubble of the landslide that has so far claimed 10 lives, continued to amaze doctors at Canberra Hospital with his rapid progress and high spirits.

"We're delighted to say that Mr. Diver today has taken his first few steps with the assistance of our staff here," medical Director Janet Mould said.

In another dose of much-needed good news, police revealed that a woman who had been listed as being buried in the landslide had turned up safe at home.

At a press conference last week, police said the woman was swept away while

walking behind her husband along a street between the two lodges destroyed in the disaster.

But in a statement Monday, they said they had located the woman who had not been caught in the slip, but had merely become separated from her husband in the chaos that followed.

"The couple rushed out of the lodge to investigate the cause of the loud noise," a police spokesman said.

"They worked frantically with the first rescue crew to arrive at the scene but lost contact with each other."

A misunderstanding occurred with emergency crews when the husband told them he did not know where his wife was. "The rescuers assumed she must be missing," he said.

The couple, identified by the Australian newspaper as Susan and Mark Green, were reunited within two hours and returned to their country home. But did not realise their mistake until police visited Sunday.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to the victims, their families and all those involved in the rescue operation," Mrs. Green, 29, told the newspaper.

The couple had read media reports about the extraordinary story of a woman swept away while walking

behind her husband, but because the story conflicted with what happened to them, they did not make the connection, police said.

Rescue work gathered pace Tuesday ahead of bad weather predicted for the next two days that could impede progress on the treacherously unstable disaster scene.

"Looking for survivors is our most important aspect, but we have to be mindful that to get to the survivors we have to move a large amount of debris," site Controller Inspector Don Keene told reporters.

Strong chemicals have been brought in to break up the massive 20-tonne concrete slabs that prevent crews accessing the rubble where more survivors could be trapped.

One slab shifted about 30 centimetres Monday night, Mr. Keene said, forcing rescue workers to clear the site for more than three hours — a delay that has happened regularly during the five-day rescue effort.

State emergency service crews worked Tuesday to cover the upper part of the search area with high-tech sheeting, to protect workers from the rain and snow forecast for later in the week.

Liberian president gives dead-end job back to ex-foe

MONROVIA (AFP) — Liberia's President Charles Taylor gave a former enemy warlord his ministerial job back Tuesday, sidelining him in what observers dismissed as a dead-end job.

Mr. Taylor, who launched a seven-year civil war that devastated Liberia but then won elections last month, had promised to form a government of inclusion.

In nominating "General" Roosevelt Johnson as minister of rural development, Mr. Taylor gave his former factional rival a ministry which lacks even its own premises.

Monrovia still bears the scars of seven weeks of looting and fighting sparked by Mr. Taylor's attempt last year to arrest Mr. Johnson on murder charges.

Mr. Johnson was first named minister during peace talks held in Abuja in

1995 in compensation for not obtaining a seat on the then six-man Council of State, a kind of collective presidency.

The Council of State sacked him early last year. Mr. Johnson first came to prominence in 1992 as a commander of the United Liberation Movement

(ULIMO), one of the factions which took up arms against Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), which had launched the country's civil war in December 1989.

Mr. Johnson later broke away to form his own wing of the faction, largely made up of members of the Krahn ethnic group.

One of the watchwords of Mr. Taylor's presidential campaign was reconciliation. He promised to offer jobs to factional rivals.

But of 16 cabinet posts nominated so far, only four

have gone outside the National Patriotic Party, the party formed around the demobilised NPFL.

One of these was the transport portfolio, awarded Tuesday to Raleigh Seekie, who quit after a row with Mr. Johnson last year.

Like other "opposition" appointees, Mr. Seekie is considered a close ally of Mr. Taylor's.

The key portfolios of finance, education and health have yet to be filled, but analysts say they are not likely to be awarded outside the NPP.

In an editorial entitled "appointments, we are not satisfied," the independent Inquirer newspaper complained that the cabinet nominations do "not have any semblance of a government of inclusion, the fulcrum for reconciliation as Liberia moves from war to peace."

Western states suspend Bosnia envoy contacts

SARAJEVO (R) — The United States and West European states suspended contacts with Bosnia's diplomats Monday in an effort to make its ethnically riven government divide up ambassadorial posts fairly.

France, Britain, Sweden, Austria and Italy and the United States joined an initiative launched by Germany Sunday. All are deeply concerned by the faltering pace in implementing Bosnia's 1995 peace treaty.

U.S. State Department spokesman, James Foley said the shelving of contacts would not affect economic development assistance to Bosnia.

The international community's high representative in Bosnia, Carlos Westendorp, had recommended the diplomatic freeze after Serb, Muslim and Croat leaders failed to meet an Aug. 1 deadline for agreement on ambassadors.

Each of Bosnia's factions wants the plum post at the head of the Washington embassy and sources said agreement seemed to be as far away as ever. The factions, must split 33 ambassadors' posts between them.

"I believe that we won't be able to reach a decision on ambassadors today, bearing in mind this is a very difficult day and we have to discuss the law on citizen-

ship and passports too, which is an even harder issue. So nothing will be decided today," said Deputy Foreign Minister Hussein Zivalj, a Muslim.

"We'll see in the following days if final agreement can be reached. We hope it will and that we'll overcome this deadlock. But the policy paper, the way each ambassador would represent the country, is an even more crucial issue than their appointment itself," he told reporters.

Diplomatic sources said Bosnia's current ambassadors were all appointed by the Muslim-dominated wartime central government headed by President Alija Izetbegovic. That government fought separatist Serbs and Croats.

None of the current ambassadors have been approved by the postwar, inter-ethnic collective presidency, as demanded by Western powers, in a clear sign of the depths of mutual suspicion remaining between the factions.

Key planks of the 1995 peace accords remain unfulfilled, including the handover of indicted war criminals to a U.N. tribunal and the return of refugees to areas run by the faction that drove them out in war.

The postwar collective leadership is deadlocked

along communal lines on key political and economic issues that must be resolved to enable reconstruction.

NATO allies set the August deadline at a summit in May. Mr. Westendorp said he had extended the deadline until Monday because good progress had been made in negotiations on laws governing passports and citizenship.

Mr. Westendorp said that for Bosnia's ambassadors to become legitimate, agreement was needed between the country's rival ethnic groups. "As from that moment, they will be legitimate representatives of the state."

A Bosnian government official said the Muslims were ready to compromise by offering Washington to someone who was neither Serb, Croat nor Muslim but rather one of the 8.7 per cent of Bosnians considered to belong to other groups.

Mr. Zivalj said it was vital to include the category of "others" so the multi-ethnic character of Bosnia could be preserved. The current ambassador in Washington is a Jew.

Meanwhile a senior U.S. official had told words Monday for Mr. Westendorp, the international community's representative in Bosnia, two days before a high-level American trip to the area.

The senior official said that Mr. Westendorp "has not spent nearly as much time in Bosnia as we had hoped," and disputed a plan offered by Mr. Westendorp's office to assign specific Bosnian ambassadors to various foreign capitals.

Asked at a briefing whether Mr. Westendorp had done anything right, the official mentioned only a plan to suspend accreditation for Bosnian ambassadors.

The United States announced earlier Monday that it would go along with a brace of West European allies who decided not to offer accreditation to Bosnian envoys after the factions in Bosnia could not agree on a disputed law on such appointments.

Asked whether the United States was comfortable with a Westendorp formula that would have assigned a Bosnian Serb ambassador to Washington, the official replied: "We don't necessarily agree with the formula that the high representative's office has come up with."

"We do not believe the high representative's office should be trying to impose a formula telling each of the parties which embassies they get," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We think the parties should reach agree-

ment on that themselves." The official expressed disappointment with what he said was Mr. Westendorp's agreement to extend deadlines for legislation on civil aviation and citizenship, and pointedly questioned why Mr. Westendorp had not spent more time in Bosnia.

"We feel that he should be present at such a critical time in Bosnia, that he should be playing the kind of role that was expected of him when he agreed to take this job," the official said.

The official's comments came two days before a tour of the area by Robert Gelbard, U.S. special representative for implementation of the Dayton peace accords, and former Bosnia peace negotiator, Richard Holbrooke.

The two diplomats were to attend a summit in split Wednesday with Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Alija Izetbegovic, a Muslim who chairs the three-person presidency of Bosnia.

On Thursday, the team was headed to Sarajevo for a meeting with Bosnian officials there. Noting that Momcilo Krajcinik, the Serb member of the three-person presidency, had so far refused to attend, the U.S. official said, "it would be a real mistake on his part" to stay away from the meeting.

U.N. envoy: Angola's UNITA dodges peace steps

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Angola's rebel movement, UNITA, has rebuffed bids to integrate its territories with that of the government and other measures necessary to complete the peace process, the United Nations said late Monday.

Alfonso Blondin Beye, the chief U.N. representative in Luanda, and a mediation team from Portugal, Russia and the United States, concluded that UNITA "had not made any significant steps" to implement the latest Security Council resolution on the Angola crisis, a U.N. statement said.

Mr. Beye said that the mediators had "found unacceptable" an Aug. 3 UNITA proposal on extending the government's administration to the vast areas they controlled, saying the plan had too "many gaps, including dates, for completing the extension of state administration."

The mediators also said it was imperative that UNITA provided credible information on the state of its army and take steps to calm down its broadcasts against the government.

After two decades of civil war, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, entered into a unity government in April with the ruling MPLA, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. But UNITA still controls large areas of the country, and its fighters should have been demobilised or incorporated into a new national army.

The Security Council has threatened sanctions against UNITA unless it fulfils its obligations under a 1994 agreement in Lusaka on which the peace process is based.

The council said the steps demanded of UNITA included demilitarisation of all its forces, transformation of its radio station into a non-partisan broadcasting facility and full cooperation in normalising state administration throughout the country.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan was asked to inform the council how UNITA was carrying out those tasks in a report he is due to submit by Aug. 15 on the situation in Angola, where a large U.N. peacekeeping operation is rapidly being reduced.

Germans clean up Oder villages after floods recede

FRANKFURT AN DER ODER (R) — Soldiers and relief workers started to clean up flood-hit villages along the Oder River in east Germany Tuesday as water levels fell back steadily, officials said.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl, briefly breaking off his annual summer holiday, was due to make a government statement in Bonn on aid for flood victims and a reconstruction plan in the wake of the Oder region's worst flooding in living memory.

A flood crisis centre spokesman in Potsdam said no new tears had appeared in flood barriers holding back the river overnight and water levels, which started dropping Sunday for the first time in three weeks, were still going down.

But local officials warned

residents not to be over-confident.

"If the dikes broke now it would be a far worse psychological blow to the population than at any time before," Matthias Platzeck, the environment minister in the state of Brandenburg, told Berlin's Infradio.

Thousands of soldiers battled on tirelessly through the night to shore up dikes along the Oder which forms part of Germany's border with Poland.

In the village of Ratzdorf at the confluence of the Oder and Neisse Rivers a clean-up operation was in full swing and residents who had been evacuated were starting to return to their homes.

"We had nearly 6,000 tonnes of gravel in sandbags here, it was a huge amount,"

Ratzdorf's Mayor Ute Petzel told the Berlin radio station.

"It looks chaotic. Technical aid workers and soldiers are helping to remove the sandbags from the streets. People are glad that their village is being to go back to normal again."

Local officials say the Oder is dropping by about three to four centimetres on average per day and will need to fall by some 1.5 metres before residents can be sure the worst is over.

The Oder was swollen by the same rains that caused flooding in the Czech Republic and Poland last month claiming more than 100 lives and causing billions of dollars' worth of damage.

Germany has escaped the worst of the floods, but damage to homes, business-

es and farms has been extensive.

German Defence Minister Volker Ruehe said Monday some 10,000 troops involved in securing the dikes would stay on to join clean-up efforts which had started in several villages.

The federal employment office said the government would create jobs for 10,000 unemployed east Germans to help with reconstruction once the threat of flooding had subsided.

President Roman Herzog was due to visit villages and towns along the Oder River to oversee relief operations in the flood-stricken region. The German government has already pledged 200 million marks in reconstruction aid.

N. Ireland police re-route three Protestant parades

BELFAST (AFP) — Three Protestant parades due to be held in Northern Ireland at the weekend were ordered by police Tuesday to re-route away from Catholic areas to reduce the possibility of sectarian confrontation.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) served notice on the Apprentice Boys Commemorative Marches in two nationalist villages and the Nationalist Lower Ormeau Road in Belfast, saying they could not go ahead as planned Saturday.

The parades were due to

be held before the main Protestant parade by 12,000 marchers in Londonderry, which celebrates the actions of a group of apprentices who spotted an advancing Catholic army in 1689 and shut the city gates, preventing it from falling.

Such expressions of Unionist identity are viewed as triumphalist and humiliating by Nationalists, and often provoke confrontations.

This year Nationalists in the Londonderry estate of the Bogside, in the shadow of the ancient city walls

over which the main parade passes, said they would stage a counter parade if the earlier parades were not re-routed.

The RUC confirmed Tuesday that three parades — in the Ormeau Road, in Dunloy, in the north of the province, and in Ballaghy, in the northwest — could not go ahead as planned.

"They may move to other villages, but they will have to notify us," said an RUC spokesman.

Nationalist groups welcomed the decision and the Apprentice Boys, while ex-

pressing disappointment, said they would act within the law. Attention now will focus on whether Nationalists call off their counter-demonstration.

Talks between Protestant and Catholic groups in Londonderry to try to ensure the Londonderry parade passed off without trouble broke up Monday without agreement.

Last year the British government banned the Londonderry march on public safety grounds. The Apprentice Boys were eventually allowed to hold it in October.

World's oldest person, Jeanne Calment, dies at 122

MARSEILLES (R) — Frenchwoman Jeanne Calment, who reached the highest age ever documented in a human being, died Monday aged 122 years and 164 days at her retirement home in the Provencal town of Arles.

Calment, who enjoyed wine, chocolate and the odd cigarette until the end in defiance of medical advice, died in mid-morning of an unspecified cause, according to doctors at the Du Lac home where she spent her last 12 years.

Born on Feb. 21, 1875, when Lenin was five years old, she was a living link back to a time without cars, telephones, movies or aircraft. Her life spanned the rule of 20 French presidents.

"We will never forget this marvellous, great lady," said President Jacques Chirac.

"I will always remember the freshness of her spirit, her occasionally biting humour, her tenderness and her generosity... Her secret was to remember only the best moments and forget all the others," Mr. Chirac said in a statement.

"She occupied an important place in our history and in our hearts," added Prime Minister Lionel Jospin.

Though blind, virtually deaf and confined to a wheelchair, the frail, diminutive woman remained lucid and kept her cheerful sense of humour to the end.

She used to say that a smile was her recipe for long life. "I've only ever had one wrinkle and I'm sitting on it," she once remarked. "I will die laughing."

Arles was in mourning, said Mayor Michel Vauzelle.

"She was the living memory of our town. She brought us comfort and hope with her liveliness, humour and tenderness. In short, we had hoped she was immortal," he said.

The Guinness Book of Records listed her as the oldest person who ever lived and had a birth certificate to prove it.

Calment reached 120 years and 238 days on Oct. 17, 1995, passing the oldest ever authenticated age of 120 years and 237 days at which Japan's Shigechiyo Izumi died in 1986, according to the book.

It dismissed rival claims for lack of documentation, including a former Brazilian slave, Maria Do Carmen Geronimo, who celebrated

her 125th birthday last March.

French media said that following Calment's death, the oldest living person was now Christian Mortensen, a Danish-American due to celebrate his 115th birthday on Aug. 16 at a retirement home in San Rafael, California.

Calment outlived her husband Fernand Calment who died in 1942 — four years before their golden wedding anniversary — as well as her daughter who died in 1934 and her grandson, a doctor who died in 1963.

"God must have forgotten me," she once said.

Born into a well-to-do family 10 years after the assassination of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln, she met Vincent Van Gogh as a girl when the artist came to shop at her father's art supplies store.

She described Van Gogh as "ugly as a louse" and "boorish and impolite. I ran the other way."

Calment reached 65, retirement age, the year France was invaded by Hitler's Nazis in 1940, and was 70 when French law allowed her to vote for the first time.

"Jeanne Calment's longevity is due to genetic factors. Her ancestors generally lived incomparably longer than the average," said geriatric physician Bernard Forette.

Her resilience kept her riding a bicycle until 100.

On her 121st birthday in 1996, the "Joyenne of humanity" launched an improbable career as a pop artist, issuing a compact disc entitled "Mistress Of Time" on which she spoke to a backing of funk-rap, techno and dance music.

Calment famously pushed a lawyer who gambled in a 1965 property deal that he could inherit her home cheaply.

When Calment was 90, Andre-Francois Raffray, then 47, agreed to pay her 2,500 francs (\$400) a month until she died, on condition he would inherit her house in Arles, a system common in France.

Raffray died in 1995, aged 77, having paid Calment more than 900,000 francs (\$143,000) over 30 years — three times the value of the house. "We all make bad deals in life," she remarked on her 120th birthday.

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Serving the cause of peace

IN YET another Jordanian effort to end the stalemate in the peace talks, His Majesty King Hussein has delegated His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to hold talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on means to reinject life into the peace talks.

Jordan's endeavours, which complement Egyptian and U.S. efforts to overcome obstacles impeding the resumption of Palestinian-Israeli peace talks, stem from the Kingdom's firm belief that countries and peoples of the region have no choice but to pursue comprehensive peace. The alternative is more violence, more despair and more inhumanity. That is something that nobody in the region, can, or should have to, live with.

In launching this new initiative, Jordan is capitalising on the high credibility it enjoys on both the international and regional levels to help the Palestinian people and salvage the peace process. Jordan's commitment to peace cannot be overemphasised and its support for the Palestinian people in their efforts to regain their rights is unequivocal. Its effort to help save the peace can only be appreciated by all.

What everybody needs to understand is that nobody is doing anybody a favour by bringing the peace process back to life. The vital and strategic interests of all peoples of the region dictate that peace is achieved. Israel in particular should not push the Palestinian people into succumbing to the policies of despair. As much as it has a right to security, Palestinians have a right to live free from fear, intimidation and collective imprisonment.

Israel is not serving its interests or the cause of peace by applying collective punishment to the Palestinians, closing the crossing points and destroying the Palestinian economy. These measures can only hurt people's interests and result in frustration on which extremism can feed.

Few months ago, King Hussein succeeded in securing the agreement on Israeli troop redeployment in Hebron. Jordanian efforts played a major role in ending a disturbing chapter in efforts to bring about peace and stability in the region. The visit of Prince Hassan to Israel today offers another opportunity for breaking the deadlock in the peace talks. Israel must not let this opportunity pass. Achieving a breakthrough in these difficult times is a necessity that might restore the lost confidence in the peace process. This confidence must be shared by the peoples of the region. Obviously, the Palestinians cannot believe in a process under which their life is put on hold for actions for which they are not responsible.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Arab Al Yawm demanded that the Arab Nation's wealth be used to end the poverty and famine facing Arab societies and called on the oil-rich countries to invest in the Arab World rather than deposit funds in foreign nations, helping them to manufacture weapons. Taher Adwan said that the Arab masses surely require democracy, but they cannot enjoy this democracy if they are poor and deprived of the basic necessities of life. Individual wealthy Arabs and rich Arab countries tend to deposit their huge funds in foreign banks or spend extravagantly on personal matters and on unessential things, while many parts of the Arab World fall prey to poverty, starvation and deprivation, he noted. The writer said that it is painful to see poor Arab states face humiliation as they borrow from foreign nations for development purposes while rich Arab countries spend billions on weapons just to keep the Western arms factories working. The writer said that while Arab countries' wealth is being looted, Arab countries' water rights usurped and Arab children die of hunger and deprivation, the rich Arabs spend lavishly to satisfy their own selfish desires or buy weapons that can never protect Arab sovereignty or restore occupied Arab lands.

A WRITER for Al Dustour reflected on a recent press report announcing a hike, ranging between 25 and 65 per cent, in private doctors' fees, saying that the move will not only be detrimental to the limited-income groups it will also increase the already heavy burden on the Health Ministry's hospitals and health centres. Mohammad Daoud said that the suggested rates, as approved by the Jordan Medical Association (JMA), are bound to cause further sufferings to the poor. We realise that the medical sector has been facing a rising cost of medical equipment, but the JMA has also an obligation to give due regard to the humanitarian considerations and introduce measures that would not make it impossible for the limited-income groups to enjoy the right to medical care. The increase in the doctors' fees, and in the fees of specialists, ought to be a moderate and balanced one, taking into account the interests of the doctors and the patients alike, demanded the writer. He said that the JMA, which realises the difficult economic conditions in the country, should take immediate steps to ensure the increases in the doctors' fees remain within reason.

Washington Watch

Congress eagerly provides extra benefits for Israel

By Dr. James Zogby

CONGRESS, REFLECTING the mood of U.S. public opinion, is usually not inclined to grant foreign aid. To secure foreign aid for new recipients, the administration must usually wage an intense campaign to convince members of Congress of their value to U.S. interests and foreign policy objectives.

This is not the case with foreign aid to Israel, which receives the single largest amount of such aid grants.

While the amounts themselves are significant, especially for a country as rich as Israel, the conditions under which Congress awards aid to Israel are even more interesting.

Oftentimes Congress goes beyond the administration's request for Israel and makes special provisions that are excessive and not known by most Americans. Two examples follow:

Foreign Operations FY98 Appropriations Bill (H.R. 2159)

The Foreign Operations Appropriations for FY '98 provides over \$3 billion in aid to Israel; \$1.8 billion through the Military Financing Programme (MFP) and \$1.2 billion through the Economic Support Fund (ESF), plus an additional \$80 million for refugees from the former Soviet Union. At the same time, it provides \$75 million for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

According to a special provision in this year's legislation, \$1.2 billion from the Economic Support Fund are to be "provided to Israel as a cash grant within 30 days of the signing of this act" (emphasis added) rather than held by the U.S. until formal proposals are tendered requesting specific dollar amounts.

This is contrary to U.S. practice with every other recipient nation. It places Israel in a unique position and, in fact, increases the amount of aid Israel receives as it is allowed to invest said "cash grant" until needed and collect the interest thereon.

Additionally, since the aid is given up front in the form of a cash grant, there are no AID or GAO accounting procedures required. The Israeli aid programme is the only one exempted from any such supervision.

Typically, recipients of MFP grants are required to use the funds for the purchase of American goods from U.S. companies; Israel is the only exception allowed to this rule.

Here, once again, Congress' one-sided excesses are clearly apparent. Of the \$1.8 billion, \$475 million "shall be available for the procurement in Israel of defence articles and defence services" (emphasis added), relieving Israel of the requirement that the funds received be used for the purchase of American goods and depriving American companies of the benefits of these prospective sales. In effect, Congress is providing a subsidy to the Israeli arms industry.

And as if these exceptions for Israel were not one-sided enough, the 105th Congress creates even greater imbalance by seeking to impose new conditions and restrictions on the disbursement of any U.S. aid to the Palestinians. Congressman Jim Saxton's (Republican from New Jersey) amendment to H.R. 2159 states that "the PLO should do far more to demonstrate an irrevocable denunciation of terrorism" before receiving any future U.S. aid.

Among the more excessive requirements enumerated in the Saxton Amendment are that "the PLO cease all anti-Israel rhetoric which potentially undermines the peace process", essentially requiring that the PNA suspend free speech. At the same time, the amendment calls on the PNA to "respect civil liberties, human rights and democratic norms as applied equally to all persons regardless of ethnic, religious or national origin."

Such requirements strain credibility because they are so blatantly one-sided and contradictory: on the one hand, the PNA is told to restrain free speech while, on the other, it is required to respect civil liberties.

Even more outrageous are the extensive permutations that any potential aid to the Palestinians must go through even after all the aforementioned requirements have been met. The language of the Saxton Amendment states that "funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be obligated for assistance to the PLO or the PNA only for the period beginning three months after the date of the enactment of this Act and for six months thereafter," and only if a number of very specific conditions are met.

These conditions amount to nothing less than congressional micro-management of U.S. grants to the Palestinians. In addition to various conditions imposed on the PNA, the Saxton Amendment, if passed, greatly encumbers the administration with numerous monitoring and reporting requirements.

For three decades now, U.S., international and even Israeli human rights organisations have called on the government of Israel to honour both U.N. and international laws regarding the Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

These respected human rights groups have reported (and continue to report on) extensive wide-ranging Israeli violations of international law, and Palestinian rights through such practices as:

- use of excessive force to quell disturbances;
- torture and inhumane treatment of prisoners;
- administrative detention without charges or trial;
- collective punishment of innocent civilians.

After turning a blind eye to Israeli abuses of Palestinian rights for thirty years, Congress has now discovered the value of Palestinian human rights.

This is important, but it will only be meaningful if it is applied to Israel as well as to the PNA.

Additional aid given to Israel

In addition to the normal aid requests of \$3.1 billion, Congress has found ways to pile on extra benefits for Israel by attaching amendments to the budgets of the other departmental budgets of the federal government. There are sometimes Israeli add-ons in the Commerce Department budget (to support U.S.-Israeli hi-tech cooperation) and to the Agriculture Department budget (to support Israel's agricultural and water-use project). Nowhere are there add-ons more pronounced than in the Pentagon's budget.

The following report was compiled by Sean Twing, a reporter and editor for The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs:

The House recently passed H.R. 1119, the Defence Department Authorisation Bill for fiscal year 1998, with an additional \$81 million added for the purchase of Israeli-produced or co-produced defence products that the Pentagon did not ask for, broken down as follows:

— \$39 million for Israeli-produced missiles. These missiles were not requested by the Pentagon.

— \$20 million for reactive armour tiles to retrofit Armoured Personnel Carriers. This money was part of an additional \$53 million added to the programme beyond that requested by the Pentagon.

— \$22 million to outfit U.S. Air Reserve and Air National Guard F-16s with Israel's Litening navigation and targeting pod. This money, again not requested by the Pentagon, is particularly irksome because there is a superior American-produced system that fulfils the same functions as Litening.

The Senate's Armed Services Committee also added \$65 million more to the Defence Authorisation Act, in addition to money

already added by the House. This additional funding breaks down as follows:

— \$15 million for Israel's Arrow anti-ballistic missile (similar in function to the Patriot missile of Gulf war fame), in addition to the \$38.7 million already requested by the Pentagon for the Arrow programme. Since the Arrow's inception in 1998, the U.S. has funded in excess of \$650 million for the missile that Pentagon officials repeatedly have said they have no intention of buying because it does not meet U.S. operational requirements.

— \$45 million for the Tactical High Energy Laser (THEL), in addition to the \$16.5 million originally requested by the Pentagon.

— \$5 million extra for the Boost Phase Intercept (BPI) programme. The Pentagon requested \$12.9 million for the programme this year. Last year the 104th Congress appropriated \$24.3 million for BPI research, even though the Pentagon asked for only \$9.3 million for BPI.

It is important to point out that these extra funding provisions are in addition to Israel's annual \$3 billion aid package from the United States, and in addition to money for Israeli products and joint U.S.-Israeli projects already funded by the Pentagon.

If the legislation passes as it has been marked-up by the House and Senate, the 105th Congress will add \$146 million to the Pentagon's budget, in addition to a \$68.1 million already requested by the Pentagon. Therefore, U.S. taxpayers will contribute an additional \$214.1 million to Israel in indirect foreign aid.

These extraordinary exceptions and benefits given to Israel require explanation. Why is Congress so inclined to give such excessive and one-sided benefits to Israel while, at the same time, pursuing what appears to be a vendetta against the Arabs?

Vietnam: The tiger gets off the bicycle

By Gwynne Dyer

"WE SHOULD not beg for help from foreign capitalists, but improve management and policy-making so as to serve the interests of the national economy and create conditions to compete with developed capitalist economies."

A slogan from a Stalin-era Soviet Communist Party Congress approving another 5-year plan? An exhortation from some little Red Book-waving fanatic during China's Cultural Revolution? No, it was said in early July by Nguyen Van Linh, head of the Vietnamese Communist Party from 1986 to 1991 and the "father" of the reforms that started Vietnam down the road to a market economy. And Linh, now 82, would not condemn "unfair" competition by foreign investors and urge the government to protect local industry without the backing of powerful figures in the regime.

On the surface, Vietnam's opening to the outside world is still official policy. Post-modern office blocks and hotels have erupted in both Hanoi and Saigon (officially renamed "Ho Chi Minh City"), but that is as futile as trying to rename Bombay "Mumbai". The rush-hour crowds that surge through both cities still move on a tide of bicycles, but the steady 8 per cent annual economic growth seems to justify the optimistic phrase "tiger on a bicycle".

Moreover, this month's elections for the National Assembly were less tightly controlled than any before.

The vast majority of the 450 people elected were loyal Communists, but three genuine independents won seats, including a Catholic bishop in central Nghe An province and a prominent doctor in Saigon who once served in the U.S.-backed South Vietnamese army.

"Tran Thanh Trai was elected... regardless of his previous record," said the official announcing the election results on July 28, in an unconscious demonstration of the ruling party's ambivalence about "opening" the economy and the society. A little bit of opening is clearly a good thing that brings in both money and praise — but too much could threaten the regime itself.

"Vietnam was never a very persuasive economic 'tiger' anyway. Average per capita income in Vietnam is about the same as in desperately impoverished Burma... Moreover, it was never certain that the regime was really serious about change."

The first people to feel the wind shift were the foreign investors who started sniffing around Vietnam in the early 90s, and then flooded in after the United States ended its trade embargo in 1994. At one point in 1995, two new international companies were setting up in Vietnam each week — but this year, there have been many more leaving than arriving.

The first big shocks came

last year, when the Communist Party launched a "cultural purity" campaign against foreign consumer goods and advertising styles.

Censors painted out Coca-Cola's billboards, censured the Philippines brewery San Miguel for implying that sharing a beer is a sign of friendship, and banned the bra ads of the German-based Triumph company for prudishness.

Beyond these symbolic difficulties, real problems were forcing foreign companies to rethink their investments: vast amounts of red tape that delayed official approval of new projects for months or years; pervasive corruption; a sketchy and unpredictable legal system; utterly inadequate

infrastructure from roads to telephones. Then on top of that came clear signs of government hostility.

Last year's Communist Party congress bristled with Marxist rhetoric and called for closer state control of the economy. Nobody intends a full return to the old centrally planned economy, but it is becoming clear that the apparitions will not allow the huge bureaucracy that was

created to run that economy to be dismantled, because that is where their jobs are.

If Vietnam must grow more slowly economically in order to avoid challenges to their monopoly of political power, they will willingly pay that price. (More precisely, their fellow-countrymen will pay it, but never mind.) Nguyen Van Linh's recent outburst is only one of many signs that the party membership is coming to precisely that conclusion. This tiger is getting off the bike.

Vietnam was never a very persuasive economic "tiger" anyway. Average per capita income in Vietnam is about the same as in desperately impoverished Burma, and between a fifth and a tenth of what it is in Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia, the other big countries in the region. Moreover, it was never certain that the regime was really serious about change.

The self-serving, self-perpetuating Communist Party that has ruled northern Vietnam for fifty years, and the entire country for the past two decades, only embraced economic reform because it had to. Three-digit inflation, rural hunger and looming economic collapse forced it into economic restructuring in 1986. Then the collapse of the Soviet Union, its main source of foreign aid, pushed it further down that road.

So Vietnam's currency was devalued to a realistic level, and farmers got their land back, and the regime passed a liberal investment code to attract foreign money.

Inflation fell, the country returned to its traditional role as a net exporter of rice, and foreign firms flocked in. But that was then, and this is now.

"The reforms of the 1980s were absolutely necessary for the country to stay afloat," said a Hanoi-based diplomat. "Now, there is much less urgency for the government." The people in power fear (probably rightly) that an unbridled free market would erode their political power, and now the crisis has receded.

So when the new National Assembly meets in September, the government will probably call a halt to further economic change. And the man tipped as new Communist Party chief is Le Kha Phieu, a conservative with close links to the armed forces.

Vietnam, like Burma, is being sacrificed to the interests of a relatively narrow elite (Communist in one case, military in the other, but it scarcely makes a difference). And will the 75 million Vietnamese accept it? They have little choice.

Reports from remote Thai Binh province this month talk of angry farmers demonstrating against poverty and corruption, fighting the security forces, even burning the houses of local Communist officials. That sort of thing happens occasionally in even the most tightly controlled states when people get desperate enough. But the Vietnamese Communists can probably hang onto power for at least another decade if they do not lose their nerve.

Patrimony and parsimony

By Ali Kassay

ONE OF the most popular pastimes in Jordan is monitoring world news. From dawn to dusk, Jordanians of all walks of life can be seen with their cars glued to a radio receiver, trying to learn what has been happening in the world around them. Nor are they contented in this quest to get their information from one source. Whether they work in a profession that requires constant monitoring of events or not, you will find that most Jordanians follow avidly the bulletins of two or three stations.

In keeping with this tradition, I settled down two days ago at eight o'clock in the evening to watch the Arabic news bulletin on Jordan Television. Towards the end of it we were treated to a feature on home economy that started off intriguingly enough.

The announcer kicked off by informing us that all governments in the world have one thing in common, the need to prepare an annual budget. Similarly, he added, every family has a similar need to prepare one, and to keep its spending within its means. This was fair enough, we thought to ourselves, but what was he trying to tell us?

To drive the point home, we were shown a succession of interviews in which honest, hard-working country folks, assured us that they do not spend more than they have, and described various strategies that they follow in order to cope with incidental expenses, like the Eid, such as making their purchases a month in advance of the happy event. So far so good. When revenue is in short supply, people resort to imaginative belt-tightening measures in order to make ends meet.

This is plain fact, but we were still wondering what was the message to convey which the news department of Jordan Television devoted so many minutes of news time.

The answer came in an interview with an urbane looking gentleman who expressed his regret that, unlike older people, particularly in the country, young urban professionals are less apt to keep their expenses within their income, perhaps, he speculated, because they believe that they have greater needs. I suppose they are guilty of expecting to eat a regular and balanced diet out of their honest work. More than that, they know too well what to hope for. Peculiarly enough, no one saw fit to ask him whether young urban professionals were not entitled to higher expectations than their ancestors after the investment they put in gaining education. Moreover, what is the progress of a nation if not an improvement in people's standard of living from one generation to the next?

But the question that was being addressed did not concern the healthy and legitimate ambition for a better life, that is so often described as the right of every Jordanian. The journalist was striking a blow against the phenomenon of debauchery that is creeping into our honest and sober society, an example of which was demonstrated by the last interview. The speaker, an elderly rural gentleman, criticised the young for insisting on having luxury items, such as chairs, in their houses, and even cupboards where they keep their clothes, when his own mother used to roll her spare clothes into a bundle which she used as a pillow during the night.

This is indeed a fine example of the way to a bright and happy future. In fact, it may be a good idea to take this approach to its logical conclusion by enjoining Jordanians to follow the virtuous example of our earlier ancestors, the greatest economists of them all, who reduced their expenditure considerably by living in caves and fabricating their implements out of flint.

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Crown Prince visits Israel in bid to revive peace talks

(Continued from page 1)

ambassador is reported to have lasted for more than three hours.

Mr. Arafat added that, because of the eight-day siege, Palestinian cities are running short of food and medicine. He called upon Arab countries to help the Palestinians in this crisis.

He said that Israeli security investigators have confirmed to Palestinian security officials that the two suicide bombers were not from the West Bank or Gaza Strip and said assumptions are that the assassins came from outside the Palestinian territories.

"It is clear that the objective (behind the siege) is to hit the peace process and to humiliate the Palestinians," said Mr. Arafat. "But I say to Netanyahu that he is still new at politics. He does not know the Palestinian people. He spent his whole life outside Israel. I want to tell him that nobody can degrade the Palestinian people," Mr. Arafat said.

He urged the U.S., European Union (EU), Japan and Norway to intervene in the mediation efforts to ensure the resumption of peace talks.

Mr. Arafat reiterated the PNA's position in denouncing the Jerusalem blasts and said that he will never allow anyone to plan and launch terrorist acts against Israeli civilians from Palestinian soil.

The Palestinian leader said the PNA has called for an urgent meeting of the 22-member Arab League and the United Nations Security Council to discuss the latest "Israeli measures against Palestinians."

Mr. Arafat said that the "Israeli violations" were not merely against agreements signed between the two sides, but also were violations of the human rights of Palestinians and international laws.

Dr. Majali said Jordan and other Arab states should use their good relations with the EU to "reduce the suffering of the Palestinian people." He added that Arab countries should extend economic help to the Palestinians at this stage.

this stage.

The premier urged the Palestinian people to remain steadfast "behind their leadership and avoid all differences" to overcome the crisis.

"The Israelis and the Palestinians are locked up over big differences in views, but in the last few days we have witnessed some moves and we felt some desires on both sides towards a compromise," said Dr. Tarawneh in the interview with Jordan T.V.

Referring to bomb attacks in Jerusalem, the foreign minister said: "The attack was a human disaster but the subsequent measures by the Israelis have created another difficult humanitarian situation."

Dr. Tarawneh added: "When Israel seals off Palestinian cities, it is preventing the movement of people and preventing food and medicine from reaching the Palestinians," adding that "even the U.N. sanctions on Iraq have excluded food and medicine."

He noted that 70 per cent of the PNA's funds are channelled through Israel, but Israel has stopped the procedure and blocked international crossing points on the Jordan River and at Rafah.

Dr. Tarawneh expressed hope that U.S. envoy Ross will not come here only to discuss the situation but to pave the way for the resumption of negotiations since the U.S. is the sponsor of the peace process and is responsible for putting matters in their right perspective.

Referring to Jordanian-Egyptian contacts, he said that the King has instructed him to maintain contacts with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa so that coordination can be maintained between the two sides, noting that he has been in contact with Palestinian officials including Mahmoud Abbas and Nabil Shaath and the Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy.

"It is regrettable that after seven years on the Madrid Conference we remain at the initial stage and we are moving slowly," Dr. Tarawneh said.

Elections set for November 4, opposition remains in disunity

(Continued from page 1)

said, "We welcome talks with the Islamists, but not on the essential parts of the Constitution and the law."

Thus far, the IAF has been joined in the boycott by the Jordanian People's Democratic Party (Al Hashd), the Jordan Arab Constitutional Front, the National Action Front and Al Ansar.

Six other parties have maintained a position of "conditional participation" — they will participate pending a government decision to meet several conditions delineated in a memo submitted to the Higher Committee for Coordination Among Opposition Parties.

The main difference between the two opposition camps lies in the issue of the one-man, one-vote system: the IAF and company demand this clause in the electoral law be abolished while the second group of six has not made their participation contingent on this.

One party member from the "undecided six" was quoted yesterday as saying that the demand of the boycotting parties to abolish the one-man, one-vote clause and put it at the head of the dialogue agenda was a "condition to stop the dialogue, not start it."

The general sentiment among both camps, however, is that all eleven parties are waiting for the

government to extend its hand to the opposition.

"We have not yet met with the government, but we are certainly ready," said Khalil Haddadin, Lower House deputy representing the Jordanian Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, one of the six parties still indecisive over the boycott issue. "But if the government wants to meet, and is serious, let them call us."

A source from the IAF yesterday expressed a similar sentiment.

"The IAF may go with the five to a dialogue," the source told the Jordan Times. "But we haven't made any request (to meet Dr. Majali). The prime minister said that any party could 'meet' him, but he hasn't invited us, and a meeting is not the same as a dialogue. We maintain that we are ready as soon as we receive an invitation."

Mr. Nahas also said that the five were prepared to start a dialogue, but "I don't know if it is [the parties] who should take the initiative."

Mr. Nahas conceded that a failure to reach a consensus among the eleven parties did reflect disunity among the opposition that is only relevant "to [the elections] issue." However, he added that he was not hopeful that the remaining six parties would follow suit.

"I think their final decision will be to participate," he said.

Israel arrests 11 more Palestinians; withholds badly needed PNA funds

(Continued from page 1)

trade with Egypt and Jordan. Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu's spokesman Shai Bazak said in a statement, "agreements must be respected by both sides. Until now Israel fulfilled all its obligations according to the agreements, yet the PNA is not doing so and in the main it is not fulfilling its obligation in

the most important area — the fight against terror. When the PNA fulfils its obligations Israel will transfer money. Israel will no longer pay with dead lying in the streets..."

Israeli Industry and Trade Minister Nathan Sharansky said he believed the steps taken were correct.

"We don't know who carried out the terrorist activities

Gangland violence is plaguing a sleepy seaside town in Israel. Some people blame the phenomenon on Russian immigrants. Others say a growing wealth gap is the cause. The main concern is that the menace could spread to other parts of the country.

By Dina Shilo

NETANYA, Israel — Sitting at one of the many cafes on the main square in the seaside resort of Netanya, a stranger might imagine being in the most peaceful town in Israel. Children eat ice cream and tourists sip iced coffee as beach-goers drift lazily by.

In fact, this sleepy Mediterranean town, with its clean beaches and unpolluted air is fast becoming Israel's crime capital. In May, Alex Dubitsky, the "gambling king" of Netanya, was shot dead by a motorcycle gang. Mobsters are also controlling gambling, prostitution and money-laundering rings.

Crime on this scale is unusual in Israel. Despite the threat of terrorist attacks, the crime rate has always been relatively low. Murders in broad daylight were confined to the cinema screen — at 0.5 per 100,000 people, the number of intentional homicides is the lowest among industrialised countries listed by the World Bank — and the kind of random violence found in big American cities was unheard of.

But things are changing, and the fear is that Netanya, north of Tel Aviv, could be providing a forerunner of things to come in the rest of the country. Some commentators say the rise in the crime rate — 6.5 per cent between 1995 and 1996 — is a result of increasing prosperity and a wealth gap.

"When a country is modernised, there is a growing gap between those who have and those who don't," says Giora

Rahav, a sociology professor at Tel Aviv University.

"Israel has always had crime, just not as much as Western societies because Israel was lagging behind in terms of development. Now Israel has caught up, so there is more crime."

Resort towns such as Netanya are a favourite haunt of criminals because holidaymakers bring in money and spend it on leisure activities including gambling. Netanya is a typical resort mixture of tourist hotels, smart, upmarket housing and low-grade tenements. Its 170,000 residents constitute a further diversity. Walking along the streets, one hears an equal amount of French, Hebrew and Russian spoken.

"Precisely because we are a resort town, there's a great gap between the rich visitors and the poor locals," says Uri Arazi, a journalist covering the Netanya-area for the daily newspaper Ma'ariv.

Some local people blame the crime wave on Russian immigration. Israel, a country of 5.6 million, has absorbed about 700,000 immigrants from the former Soviet Union in the past seven years. As in all previous waves of immigration, the newcomers breed resentment and anger among some Israelis.

"These Russian people come here (and) bring all kinds of bad stuff with them," says a sea-front stallholder, Shimon, who sells beach balls, cold drinks and ice creams.

Russians are often accused of bringing with them prostitution and gambling.

"This is nonsense," says sociologist Rahav. "There is absolutely no indication that the influx of immigrants has contributed to the rise of crime. Even if Russians do run some of these crime rings — and I am not saying they do — they are just replacing the old ones, not creating new ones."

Arazi agrees. "You can't really blame the Russians," he says. "The crime was here before they came. It has just got worse. I don't think the police have really been able to deal with it."

Talk of police inadequacy has become widespread. The police refuse to comment. "We have absolutely nothing to say on this subject," said a spokeswoman.

They closed two rival casinos when the killings began, and posted 100 extra officers in the town. But their clean-up operations have been hampered by an unwillingness of those involved or victimised to report criminal behaviour.

Amir Badatzi, a restaurateur and petrol-station proprietor, is an exception. He went to the police after demands for protection money. One newspaper dubbed him "the bravest man in Netanya."

Police made an arrest and provided Badatzi with protection. A day before he was to testify, a smoke bomb was hurled through his restaurant window. But he went ahead and testified, telling a television reporter: "I won't let them scare me."

Most traders do not want to complain too openly about the rise in crime. Those working at stalls in the market shook their heads when asked about the protection racket.

Other business owners are keeping a stiff upper lip — worried perhaps about the effect the problem could have on their trade.

"The situation hasn't affected our market at all," insists a spokesman for the Anglo Saxon property agency.

But Ivan Pope, an insurance agent, admits there are concerns amongst Netanya residents about the violence.

"For now, the criminals are only killing each other," he says. "But people are getting worried. They believe it might spread to the general population. And that is worrying."

Gemini News Service

3 civilians killed in Israeli air raids on Lebanon

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli army spokesman said in Jerusalem after the first raid.

Mohammad Hassan Muzzaheem, 74, was killed while tending his flock after Israeli warplanes fired missiles at the Jabal Al Dahr hilltop in the first raid, hospital officials said.

Another shepherd, Ali Moussa Aqel, 72, was taken to hospital but later died of his wounds, they said. Four others were wounded in the raid and taken to hospital.

They were identified as Darweesh Hassan Aqel, 70, Hassan Haider Ibrahim, 65, Shibli Mohammad Aqel, 13, and Ibrahim Tawfiq Ibrahim, 11.

Also Tuesday, a 21-year-old Lebanese civilian, Ziad Jahjah, was killed by the explosion of a roadside bomb on the Kfayoun-Jezzine road in the Israeli-occupied zone, according to the SLA's Voice of the South radio station.

No group has yet claimed the bomb attack. Hizbollah guer-

rillas had earlier fired rockets on two positions manned by SLA militiamen in Kawkaba and Zimariya, just at the edge of the occupied border zone and facing the Jabal Al Dahr area. Israeli artillery also returned fire by launching about 30 rockets on Jabal Al Dahr, Lebanese police said.

A militiaman was "lightly injured" in Zimariya, SLA sources said.

The Israeli air raid, the 31st this year, came as at least 10,000 Hizbollah followers attending funerals in the southern town of Nabatiyyeh for four guerrillas killed by a bomb allegedly left behind by Israeli commandos in a raid deep into Lebanese territory Monday.

Funerals for a fifth guerrilla killed by the blast will be held later Tuesday in Beirut. Six Lebanese civilians were wounded in the explosion.

Lebanon Tuesday lodged a complaint to the international committee monitoring a ceasefire agreement in south

Lebanon over the injury of the six civilians Monday.

An official at the Lebanese Foreign Ministry told Agence France Presse that bombing was a violation of the April 26, 1996, truce accord because the bomb was planted in a village and it harmed civilians.

The accord, which put an end to Israel's Grapes of Wrath offensive against Hizbollah in Lebanon last year, banned Israel and Hizbollah from targeting civilians on both sides or launching attacks from civilian areas.

Since the beginning of the year, 13 Lebanese civilians have been killed and 40 wounded. At least nine SLA militiamen have been killed and 41 wounded.

Hizbollah spearheads the fight against the "security zone" Israel has established in south Lebanon to protect its northern territory from cross-border attacks.

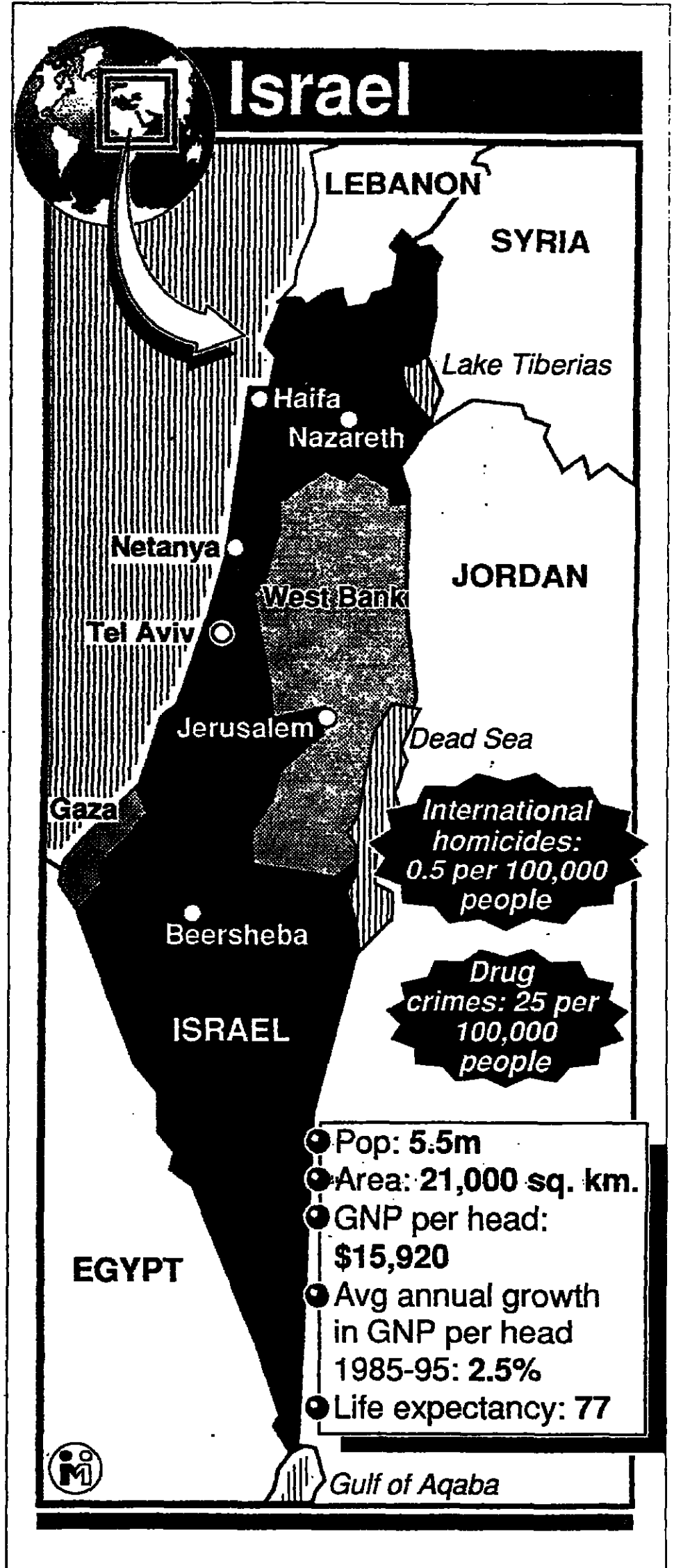
Britain for a statement telling Israel to lift what he called aggressive measures against the Palestinians.

Mr. Qidwa, who also saw U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, said Mr. Weston would discuss his request with members on Tuesday.

"We say that the Israeli government is committing an act of aggression against the Palestinian people and against the Palestinian (National) Authority," Mr.

Qidwa told reporters.

"These actions represent an unprecedented form of collective punishment and they do not serve, and indeed run contrary to, the purpose of fighting violence and extremism." They are politically motivated. We are increasingly convinced that the current government is taking those actions to preempt any progress in the peace process and maybe to kill the process as a whole," he said.



Cabin Crew Dubai

Emirates, the award-winning and rapidly expanding international airline of the United Arab Emirates, is looking for confident service-oriented cabin crew.

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Candidates should meet the following criteria:

- Educated to High School level (English educated)
- Minimum age: 22 years, maximum 30 years
- Single

- Height: Females between 5'2" (157.5) and 5'10" (178cm) - Males between 5'6" (168cm) and 6'2" (188cm)

- Proportionate height/weight ratio and good complexion
- Good eyesight without glasses (contact lenses are acceptable)
- Fluency in written & spoken English and Arabic is essential
- Previous customer service experience or flying experience an advantage

These positions are based in Dubai, the most cosmopolitan of Arabian Gulf cities, well known for its high standard of living. Benefits include a competitive tax-free salary, furnished accommodation, 30 days annual leave, medical care, duty transport, industry personal travel facilities and end of service gratuity.

Apply in English to the address given below, giving full details of your previous experience and qualifications for the position and enclosing recent full-length and passport size photographs (in colour) and a contact telephone number with complete address. Applications must be received within 21 days quoting the reference code "CC/JT" and addressed to:

The Recruitment Superintendent (IFS), Emirates, P O Box 7054, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



Emirates

THE FINEST IN THE SKY

Yeltsin announces new rouble

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1 Hindu prince	31 Drudges	All rights reserved.	
2 Asian inland sea	32 Watery fluids		
3 Cut of beef	33 — Spee	48 "— a kick out of you"	54 Proficient
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Tokyo, Hong Kong and Moscow top the list Survey ranks Cairo as Africa's most expensive city, says London is getting more costly

GENEVA (R) — Tokyo, Hong Kong and Moscow are the most expensive cities in the world, while the cities of North America are among the most affordable, according to new cost-of-living rankings published Tuesday.

According to the survey by the Swiss-based Corporate Resources Group, Moscow is nearly three times as expensive as Madras in India and South Africa's business capital Johannesburg, the cheapest of the 145 major cities examined.

The survey, a snapshot of the relative cost of living around the world, said Europe was becoming more affordable although London was getting more expensive.

London showed the highest jump in European rankings, moving up 14 places from a year ago to become the 14th most costly city in the world, the survey said.

The study is published twice a year and is widely used by governments and international companies in assessing how to pay expatriate staff.

It is based on the cost of a basket of more than 200 products and services including housing, food and alcohol, utilities,

clothing, transport and entertainment.

Housing was most expensive in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Beijing, Moscow and Shanghai.

Asia dominated the world's 10 most expensive cities, with Hong Kong moving up from fifth place last year on a strong currency and high housing costs.

Moscow kept its place as Europe's most expensive city for the second year running.

The Swiss cities of Geneva and Zurich, Europe's most expensive two years ago, fell to 22nd and 23rd in the world respectively.

Cairo ranked as the most expensive city in Africa, followed by the Congo capital Brazzaville and the Gabonese capital Libreville.

The highest climber was Nairobi, which leapt 40 places from last year's survey to rank 75th on the list.

Africa's cheapest major cities were Johannesburg, whose ranking was heavily influenced by the weak rand, and Harare, Zimbabwe's capital.

The survey said North American cities remained among the most affordable in the world. New

York moved up to 31st place from 38th, but still ranked below Paris, Cairo, Rio De Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Hanoi, Tel Aviv and Kiev.

Tehran, the world's second cheapest city two years ago, was now the world's 35th most expensive and nearly 30 per cent costlier than Montreal, the world's eighth most affordable city.

Newcomers to the top 10 list were Guangzhou in China and St. Petersburg in Russia.

The survey said the rankings in Europe had been influenced by the strength of the U.S. dollar.

95 companies distribute JD80.8m to shareholders after posting JD238.9m combined net profit

By Samir Ghawi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Profits of shareholding companies listed at the organised market of the AFM (Amman Financial Market) totalled JD238.97 million in 1996, 25.70 per cent higher than the JD189.91 million recorded at the end of December 1995, according to figures published in the AFM's Monthly Statistical Bulletin.

The total profit was described as net income after tax and included 95 companies listed at the AFM organised market.

There is a total of 209 public shareholding companies, but in addition to the 95 companies, there are 42 firms listed on the parallel market and 72 companies which are still not listed in the organised or parallel markets.

Sectorally, the banking and finance sector topped the list as the net profits of the 17 listed financial institutions totalled JD132.43 million which accounted for 55.4 per cent of the overall 1996 net profit. Last year's net profit of the financial companies was around 30 per cent higher than the JD101.68 million recorded in 1995.

The 17 insurance companies listed on the organised market posted a sharp decline in net profits as the total fell from JD6.01 million in 1995 to JD4.56 million at the end of 1996.

Having recorded an overall JD238.97 million in net profits in 1996, the 95 companies distributed a gross amount of JD80.83 million in cash dividends to shareholders compared to JD76.8 million distributed in the previous year. Of the 1996 amount, JD42.92 million or 53.1 per cent, were distributed by industrial companies.

Banks distributed JD27.84 million, or 34.4 per cent, services companies disbursed JD7.60 million and insurance institutions gave JD2.46 million in dividends.

The amounts distributed in dividends by the banks and the industries were JD2.03 million and JD4.58 million respectively, higher than the dividends given to shareholders in 1995.

Services companies and insurance institutions distributed less dividends last year as the amounts were JD7.60 million and JD2.46 million compared to JD9.82 million and JD2.85 million respectively in 1995.

Jordan Duty Free Shops Company launches operations

By Issam Qadmani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Royal Jordanian President Nader Dahabi Monday launched the operations of the JD5 million Jordan Duty Free (JDF) Shops Company which will provide commodities to foreign travellers and diplomats serving in Jordan at various border posts in the Kingdom.

As chairman of the board of the JDF, Mr. Dahabi said the first such shop will be inaugurated at the Royal Jordanian City Terminal next week.

More shops will later be opened at the various border points, he said.

According to Mr. Dahabi, JDF shops will be set up at the Iraqi-Jordanian border post of Kharaneh, in Jaber at the Jordanian-Syrian border,

at King Hussein Bridge, at the Sheikh Hussein crossing point in the northern Jordan Valley and at the Aqaba crossing to Eilat in Israel.

JDF Director General Hutham Majali said the shops will cater to visitors and tourists to the Kingdom and members of diplomatic missions accredited in Jordan. He emphasised that Jordanians and Arabs residing in Jordan, as well as resident foreigners who are not employed by diplomatic missions will not be permitted to make purchases at these shops.

The government of Jordan holds 60 per cent of company's capital, with the private sector owning the remaining 40 per cent, he said.

The launch was attended by Minister of Tourism Aqel Biltaji and Minister of Transport Nasser Lawzi.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

JETT raises capital to JD10.8m

THE GENERAL assembly of the Jordan Express Tourist Transport Company (JETT) has approved the recommendation of the board of directors to raise the company's capital from JD0.3 million to JD10.8 million. The increase will be achieved through capitalising reserves and retained earnings from previous years. The general assembly also approved distributing dividends at the rate of JD 1 per share.

Board Chairman Adnan Mufit told the shareholders that the company has prepared itself to the acceleration in tourism growth after the start of the peace process by purchasing 102 new and advanced tourist buses of all sizes at a cost of more than JD11 million. "As the region witnessed other developments that slowed the peace process, the tourism sector did not enjoy the expected tourism impetus," he said. Mr. Mufit said his company was able to keep the largest share of the market after two new companies entered the market of tourist transport.

As a result of buying the new buses, the company had to obtain long-term loans and credit facilities for about JD5.3 million. In addition, the company made new investments amounting to JD1.36 million during 1996 in order to support its activities and consolidate its position in the tourist transport market. The new investments brought the total to over JD3.3 million.

Mr. Mufit outlined the company's 1996 achievements by pointing out that total assets increased by 55 per cent from JD13.75 million to JD21.36 million and shareholders equity by 26 per cent from JD10.28 million to JD12.99 million. However, operational profit fell by 79 per cent due to lower earnings by 24 per cent. In addition, a 134 per cent rise in "utilisation expenses" of the new buses from JD746,000 to JD1.75 million was another factor behind the JD408,000 loss in tourism transport operations.

But regular transport operations which the company conducts daily turned out a JD1.06 million profit. The company also generated JD2.8 million profit from selling old buses and some investments during 1996. However, the net profit posted at the end of last year amounted to JD3.23 million (Al Dustour + Al Aswaq).

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



"This computer golf game is very realistic. If you crank up the brightness knob, you can even get a tan!"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CUJY
UNDOP
MIBBIE
DOONBY

Oh, lovely—I'll take it

SELLING HER HANDMADE BROOCHES GOT HER THIS.

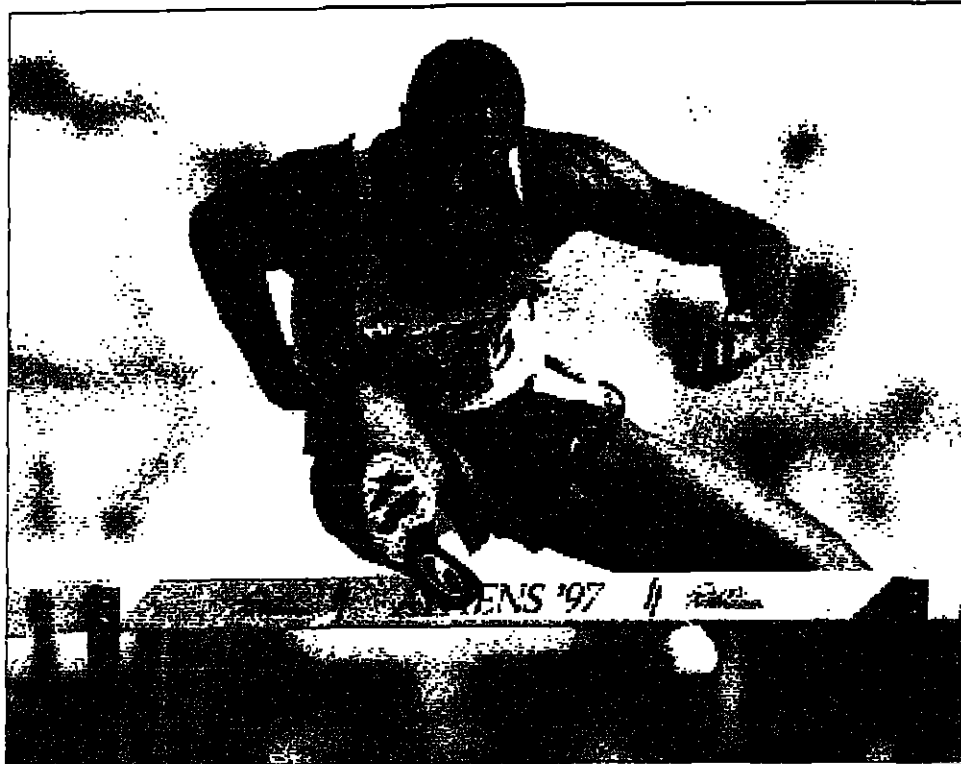
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ONION SWAMP, GARISH INDIGO
Answer: What Dad had after working in the garden — GROWING PAINS

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - ZIDZISANI											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 05/08/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRADING	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE		
2.240	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8.4	0.00	25	10671	21905	2.07	2.05	-0.02		
2.480	JOR. PHARM. INSUR.	8.4	7.42	30	9816	22465	2.26	2.28	+0.02		
2.500	THE HOUSING BK.	14.5	4.00	8	2390	11590	4.86	4.85	-0.01		
4.180	JOR. KUNAT BANK	10.7	0.00	6	2200	4607	2.97	3.01	+0.04		
1.050	JOR. GULF BANK	14.7	8.86	2	3500	2765	7.79	7.79	-		
4.050	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.9	3.07	18	13753	53936	3.91	3.91	-		
3.800	JOR. INV. FTM. BANK	21.8	0.00	2	100	334	3.34	3.34	-		
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 216.40 FCHG: -0.03 97 42609 120050											
4.550	JERUSALEM INSUR.	10.7	5.06	1	50	198	3.90	3.95	+0.05		
2.260	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	4.6	12.35	1	4000	6480	1.62	1.62	-		
3.100	NATL. AGLIA INSUR.	17.2	5.09	2	2224	6116	2.79	2.75	-0.04		
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 113.76 FCHG: +0.13 4 6274 12794											
1.820	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.0	6.02	22	12262	20309	1.64	1.66	+0.02		
1.540	INBID ELECTRICITY	8.6	7.99	2	400	86	2.40	2.44	+0.04		
2.810	HINER MINERALS	14.7	5.38	2	273	792	2.81	2.90	+0.09		
7.500	UNCL. OWNERS FED.	7.2	5.30	1	200	1220	6.90	6.90	-0.30		
1.550	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	7	6350	8081	1.43	1.45	+0.02		
1.810	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	24.2	0.00	8	3350	1809	5.51	5.51	-		
7.720	ARAB TEXT. INV. ENDC.	7.7	0.00	5	4500	13275	2.95	2.95	-		
1.220	ZAKIA EDUCATION	8.4	0.00	5	2400	2352	0.97	0.98	+0.01		
2.230	UNIFIED CO.	8.4	6.25	19	4350	9614	1.80	1.76	-0.04		
1.010	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	5	5250	3370	0.64	0.65	+0.01		
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 109.66 FCHG: +0.06 77 40535 62511											
4.450	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	26.9	2.76	11	21529	86092	3.99	3.99	-		
4.140	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	11.0	2.52	2	308	1216	3.95	3.95	-		
7.050	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.9	3.13	2	267	1707	6.45	6.40	-0.05		
10.250	JOR. PETRO. EXPANSION	9.7	8.89	18	2890	28900	10.00	10.00	-		
1.470	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	10.3	8.40	2	227	269	1.20	1.19	-0.01		
3.260	INDUSTRIAL CONGR.	9	0.00	5	448	757	1.67	1.72	+0.05		
2.570	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	11.3	6.89	21	5713	23407	4.10	4.09	-0.01		
1.800	JORDAN DATA	9.7	0.00	1	100	245	2.48	2.45	-0.03		
1.600	JOR. PIPES MANFCT.	15.4	6.06	2	350	462	1.31	1.32	+0.01		
3.410	JOR. PAPER CANBIO.	15.8	0.00	1	450	1260	2.82	2.80	-0.02		
10.250	ARAB TEXT. INV. ENDC.	16.2	0.00	5	1000	26790	5.45	5.45	-		
3.920	ARAB ALUMINA INV. ENDC.	13.4	4.59	11	4916	3404	0.46	0.46	-		
1.960	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.7	0.00	7	7400	520	1.04	1.03	-0.01		
1.310	ARAB PAPER CORV. TRD.	31.5	0.00	2	850	57	0.85	0.85	-		
1.520	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	8	7000	3570	0.52	0.51	-0.01		
1.290	INTERNED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	8	2950	1818	0.55	0.55	-		
1.980	JOR. MOCCABOOL IND.	9	0.00	8	4000	4007	0.45	0.45	-		
2.980	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	14.2	6.13	1	50	79	1.60	1.58	-0.02		
1.510	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	9	0.00	1	1000	610	0.61	0.61	-		
1.670	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	17.1	5.22	6	1463	1962	1.33	1.34	+0.01		
2.020	UNIV. MOON IND.	9	0.00	27	16150	19028	1.17	1.18	+0.01		
1.510	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	14.0	6.72	2	500	520	1.04	1.04	-		
1.620	NATL. CHLORINE	14.6	4.52	1	500	775	1.55	1.55	-		
1.070	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.4	0.00	6	3900	3276	0.83	0.84	+0.01		
2.090	EL. & TEL. REPAIR	53.1	0.00	16	1245	5300	1.44	1.51	+0.07		
1.330	INTL. TOBACCO	6.2	0.00	6	15000	13680	0.91	0.91	-		
1.260	UNION CH. & VEG.	41.8	0.00	4	2000	1840	0.93	0.92	-0.01		
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 124.50 FCHG: -0.28 181 105806 236385											
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 166.46 FCHG: -0.12 359 195224 431739											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 05/08/1997											
760	MACH. REP. REPAIR. MAIN.	9	0.00	1	500	295	0.62	0.59	-0.03		
660	JOR. TRADE PRG.	11.2	0.00	13	18400	7728	0.42	0.42	-		
540	JOR. FTR. INV. CO.	9	0.00	17	15518	9064	0.60	0.59	-0.01		
840	UNION INV. SOI	9	0.00	13	43500	8700	0.70	0.70	-		
620	ARAB FTR. INVEST.	9	0.00	31	57750	24280	0.43	0.42	-0.01		
720	AL-SHARQ INV. CO.	9	0.00	5	11050	9230	0.86	0.86	-		
570	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	66.2	0.00	16	47000	20530	0.67	0.69	+0.02		
750	NATL. MOLT. IND. RANCO	46.1	0.00	1	150	60	0.40	0.40	-		
820	JORDAN STEEL	31.5	0.00	18	27350	13783	0.92	0.92	-		
580	ARAB ELECT. IND.	9	0.00	2	1850	74	0.74	0.74	-		
730	WIDEAST PHARM. 751	9	0.00	16	56800	20411	0.62	0.64	+0.02		
520	UNION TOBACCO 751	9	0.00	1	250	95	0.95	0.95	-		
670	RAZI PHARM. 851	9	0.00	7	7750	3508	0.61	0.60	-0.01		
600	IND. ENDC.	9	0.00	6	3500	1190	0.35	0.34	-0.01		
730	IND. ENDC.	15.4	0.00	3	3000	2220	0.75	0.74	-0.01		
820	NATL. POULTRY	9	0.00	2	500	310	0.63	0.62	-0.01		
1.000	NAT. ALUMINIUM. 751	9	0.00	4	1750	75	0.75	0.75	-		
860	MID. EAST CHEM.	7.9	15.63	16	10700	6848	0.65	0.64	-0.01		
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 166.46 FCHG: -0.12 359 195224 431739											



Colin Jackson, from Great Britain in action in the men's 110m hurdles at the World Championships in Athletics August 5. Jackson won his heat and advanced to the second round (Reuters photo)

Record holder Jackson rediscovers form in time

ATHENS (AFP) — World record holder Colin Jackson ran his best time of the season to put his 110m hurdle world championships title bid back on track here on Tuesday.

In his opening qualifying heat the 30-year-old Welshman, who has struggled with injuries for the past two years, clocked 13.19secs to move easily into the semi-finals.

But Jackson, who won the world title in 1993 in Stuttgart, refused to get too excited by his performance.

"I have run fast in the heats before and then come seventh in the final. I have just got to keep my head straight," said Jackson.

Chasing Jackson home was American Mark Crear who only got into the championships thanks to the newly introduced wild card rule.

Crear, who finished fourth in the U.S. championships, revealed afterwards that his training programme had been disrupted by his sudden inclusion in the American team.

"The wild card has been bitter sweet for me. I only found out at the last minute

Medals table at the start of the 4th day of competition at the world athletics championships Tuesday

	G	S	B
United States	2	1	3
Germany	2	1	1
Ukraine	1	2	1
Australia	1	0	0
Czech Republic	1	0	0
France	1	0	0
Mexico	1	0	0
Russia	0	1	1
Canada	0	1	0
Britain	0	1	0
Jamaica	0	1	0
Romania	0	1	0
South Africa	0	1	0
Bahamas	0	0	1
Belarus	0	0	1
Lithuania	0	0	1

I would be coming here and I had been preparing instead for Zurich, a week after the championships," explained the Olympic silver medalist.

While Jackson was showing a much needed return to form defending champion Allen Johnson of American could only manage second place in his heat, run at an almost snail pace 13.52secs.

But the 26-year-old Olympic gold medalist ran a 12.97, the fastest this year,

at Stuttgart in July and still remains firm favourite to retain his title.

Cuba's Anier Garcia, second fastest man this year, also stroled into the semi-finals in an unimpressive 13.46secs.

Florian Schwarhoff, who like Jackson has been struggling to find the form that saw him take the bronze at Atlanta last year, won his heat in 13.44secs, well outside his best time this year of 13.20.

Braun wins heptathlon in memory of sister

ATHENS (R) — Germany's Sabine Braun recaptured the World Championship heptathlon title on Monday after a gap of six years but her joy at another gold medal was tinged with sadness.

Braun dedicated her victory to her late sister Birgit, who died of breast cancer in March.

After several years of illness, the 32-year-old German took her sister to a warm weather training camp in San Diego as a final holiday but she died two days before they were due to return from the United States.

"She will always be in my mind," said Braun, who won the 1991 world title.

Despite painful memories Braun was still delighted with the gold medal.

"Of all the medals I have won, this is the best yet."

Braun failed to finish at the last championships in Gothenburg two years ago and was a disappointing seventh at the Atlanta Olympics. She attributed her revival this year to a new training programme.

Last year, in an effort to rediscover her old form, she turned to Hansjoerg Holzamer, the coach of hurdler Florian Schwarhoff.

"He suggested I changed my regime and in turn it has changed my whole philosophy."

"I was bored with my training, starting the year on January 1 and knowing what sessions I would be doing on January 28."

"Now I am a lot more relaxed and after many years I like my training once more," Braun added.

Braun said her ambition was to stay at the top for three more years.

She aims to defend her title at the 1999 World Championships in Seville and then qualify for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

"If I make it to Sydney, I will have been to the Olympics five times which will be a German record."

The German athlete led the competition from the opening event on Sunday morning.

She won the 100 metres hurdles in 13.16 seconds to gain a 40-point lead over her nearest rival Denise Lewis, of Britain.

The margin of superiority varied throughout the following six events but was never relinquished.

Lewis kept up the pressure on the first day with a personal best in the shot put and a faster 200 metres performance than her German opponent. But the overnight gap between the two was still 121 points.

On Monday Braun sealed victory in the javelin, throwing 51.48 metres. She ran a controlled 800 metres, the last discipline, to notch up a final tally of 6,739 points.

"I knew realistically the gold had gone after the javelin," Lewis said. "I needed to be three or four metres ahead of Sabine in the javelin to stand a chance and just over a metre was not enough."

Nevertheless the Olympic bronze medallist was more than happy to improve to silver medal status, earned with a total of 6,654 points.

"I feel I've won a silver not lost a gold. If you don't appreciate these moments when you have them, you might never get them again," Lewis said.



A girl relaxes in the empty stands of the Olympic stadium at the World Championships where small crowds that have been attending this week's event (Reuters photo)

Championships set to make multi-million dollar loss

ATHENS (AFP) — The organisers of the World Championships are set to lose millions of dollars it was reported here on Tuesday because ticket sales are way down on expectation.

The Greek daily newspaper 'Eleftherotipia' said that there would be a huge financial fall out from the lack of paying spectators estimating that ticket sales would only recoup \$6.9 million of the cost of hosting the championships of \$51 million.

According to the paper free tickets were handed out to Greek sports associations on Monday in a desperate attempt to fill up the stadium.

Evangelos Savranis, president of the organising committee, said that 22,000 tickets, out of a capacity of 80,000, had been sold for last Saturday's opening day while a disappointing 46,000 people had paid to watch the 100 metres final on Sunday, traditionally the blue ribbon event.

The organisers said on Monday that they were hopeful of reaching a target of 45,000 spectators each day till the championships end on Sunday — still nowhere near what was budgeted for.



American Chris Huffins sprints down the track in his heat of the 100m metres decathlon competition at the World Athletics Championships. Huffins had the fastest time finishing the race in 10.39 seconds (Reuters photo)

Freeman wins historic gold medal; Kasparkova takes triple jump

ATHENS (R) — Cathy Freeman won an historic and emotional world gold medal on Monday for both her race and her country.

Freeman became the first aboriginal to take a world title when she finished first from lane one in the women's 400 metres final.

She is also the first Australian woman to win a world title and only the second athlete, ever, from Australia after Rob de Castella strode to the men's marathon title at the first world championships in Helsinki 14 years ago.

Freeman, second in last year's Atlanta Olympics, celebrated by parading the aboriginal and Australian flags around the Olympic stadium.

"I did it despite the lane and the outside pressure," she said. "I did not have a lot of energy left at the end."

"But even if I had had just a tiny bit of energy I was going to carry both flags."

"The medal I won at the Olympics made little children realise that they had got a chance."

Frenchman Stephane Diagana compensated for the disappointment of missing last year's Atlanta Olympics by winning the world 400 metres hurdles final from the front.

Diagana finished fourth in the 1992 Olympic final, fourth at the 1993 World Championships and third in the worlds two years ago.

Last year his medal chances at the Atlanta Olympics disappeared after he sustained a stress fracture to his foot and a knee injury this year was a further blow.

"I decided the only way I could win the race was if I went out hard, opened up as big a lead as possible and then try and hold on," Diagana said.

The European record holder is the first Frenchman to win a world title.

Penultimate jump gives Kasparkova gold

Czech Sarka Kasparkova recorded the third longest triple jump in the fledgling history of the women's sport to win gold at the world championships on Monday.

Kasparkova, who took bronze last year in Atlanta, where women's triple jump was first introduced in Olympics, jumped 15.20 metres with her penultimate attempt.

Only Ukraine's Inessa Kravets, who holds the world's two best marks of

15.50 and 15.33, has jumped further.

Kravets, the Olympic and world champion, was absent for Saturday's qualifying round.

Romania's Rodica Mateescu, who led the event until Kasparkova's winning leap of 15.16 metres, set at her first attempt, had to settle for silver. - Ukrainian Yelena Govorova took bronze with 14.67.

"After Rodica's first try over 15 metres, I didn't panic," said the 26-year-old Kasparkova, who had a previous best of 14.98 metres. "I knew I had five more jumps left."

"Coming third in Atlanta boosted my confidence and I knew I could make a medal. I didn't know exactly how far I could jump but I had to go very far to win so I just tried my best."

Mateescu, who had victory in sight when Kasparkova produced her winning jump, said she had mixed feelings about her silver medal.

"I'm disappointed to have missed the gold and at the same time, I'm satisfied with my performance," said Mateescu, who set a national record.



Cathy Freeman of Australia carries both the Australian and the Aboriginal flags after she won the women's 400 metres final at the 6th IAAF World Athletics Championships (Reuters photo)

Morceli threatens an epic duel with Al Guerrouj

ATHENS (AFP) — Algeria's 1,500 metres world record holder Noureddine Morceli said here on Tuesday that his battle with Moroccan Hicham Al Guerrouj for the world crown on Wednesday would be an epic.

The 28-year-old Morceli, bidding for a fourth successive world gold to add to his Olympic title, said that despite losing his unbeatable tag over 1,500 metres he would not concede his title easily.

"I feel under no pressure whatsoever. I have come here to win and I still believe I can. Al Guerrouj thinks he has won the psychological battle — well we shall see what happens out on the track," Morceli said.

The 23-year-old Al Guerrouj, who tripped over the heels of Morceli at the bell in the Olympic final, said that he was on course for the gold and winning the battle of north Africa.

"I am going to erase the memories of Atlanta. I am

going to be the new world champion and I am going to stay there for a long time," Al Guerrouj said.

Morceli, whose relations with Al Guerrouj have cooled considerably since the Moroccan started beating him, has had to get over the death of his 23-year-old brother Abdelkader, who lapsed into a coma after being knocked over by a car and died on July 26th.

Morceli, who is a small wiry fellow in the same manner of former Moroccan 5,000m Olympic champion Said Aouita, flew to his birthplace of Tunes to be with him and only flew into Athens the night before his first round heat.

"I would like to win this for my brother and the Algerian people. It is personally important to me," he said.

The Algerian, who had shown signs of returning to form prior to his enforced departure for Tunes, has displayed a lack of confidence since Al Guerrouj ended his 45 race

unbeaten run in the Grand Prix final last year — there were even accusations that he was avoiding him in the Grand Prix events prior to and after the Olympics.

He failed to finish in his much heralded head to head with Ethiopia's 10,000m Olympic champion Haile Gebrselassie in Hengelo in May and then disappeared off to Switzerland to be treated for anaemia, a similar illness that affected Jamaican Merlene Ottey.

"I really felt odd and at first I thought it was just jet lag in Hengelo after flying in from training in the United States but I was diagnosed as having anaemia. It took me a while to get back to form after the treatment but now I feel fine," he said.

On Wednesday the two men will battle it out for not only the world title but the tag of king of the blue ribbon middle distance event.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144

PHILADELPHIA "1"

Steven Spielberg's

THE LOST WORLD (JURASSIC PARK)

Starring: Jeff Goldblum & Julian Moore

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144

PHILADELPHIA "2"

Jim Carrey ... in

LIAR LIAR

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238

PLAZA

John Travolta...in

PHENOMENON

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420

CONCORD

CONCORD "1"

Liam Neeson &

Julia Roberts ...in

MICHAEL COLLINS

(12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45)

CONCORD "2"

SPACEJAM

Shows: 3:30, 6:00 only

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155

The satirical play

AMN AI AI YA HO

performance starts at 8:30 p.m.

The theatre is closed every Friday.

For reservations call 625155



Trinidad's Ato Boldon

Boldon's career hangs in the balance

ATHENS (AFP) — Sprinter Ato Boldon faces the most important race of his life here this week at the World Championships as he attempts to salvage his career and avoid becoming the youngest has-been in track history.

The fast talking Trinidadian has so far talked a better race than he has run.

While the 23-year-old has made his presence felt on Europe's lucrative Grand Prix circuit he has failed, by the huge standards he is judged by, miserably in the major races.

Expected to become the new force in sprinting when he burst on the senior scene in 1995 at Stuttgart, Boldon ended his Atlanta Olympic campaign with two bronze medals — well below what was expected of him.

Pre-favourite at the World Championships here in his bid for double gold he has already lost the 100m — fail-

ing to get even a medal as his equally young training partner Maurice Green stole the glory, and the gold.

On Wednesday Boldon begins his opening heats in the 200m and nothing but gold will stop him from sliding into history as the almost man.

It is a fact he is all too aware of.

"I am feeling the pressure as I am seen as the favourite and people feel my time has come," Boldon said.

The Trinidadian, who has set the season's best times in both the 100m and 200m, said that he had learned from his disagreement with Linford Christie after the Olympic 100m final last year when he blamed the British sprinter for upsetting him by refusing to leave the track after being disqualified.

"My girlfriend tells me that my impatience is my

problem but I have learned from Donovan (Bailey), who stayed so focused that after the final he said 'what incident?'" Boldon said.

"I feel I have learned because two of my best times this year have come after false starts."

Boldon, who moved to California to live with an uncle in 1990, has already begun talking a stunning 200m race, warning he may threaten Michael Johnson's 200m world record of 19.32 seconds, set in Atlanta last year.

"I expected a world record in that event in the Olympics but I picked the wrong man to do it! Here, however, I think I can run 19.30," he said.

With comments like that Boldon has won the talking race. Now he has to go out and do it for real.

Eriksson wins New Zealand Rally

AUCKLAND (R) — Kenneth Eriksson of Sweden won the New Zealand Rally for the first time on Tuesday when he finished the third and final leg 13 seconds clear of nearest rival Carlos Sainz of Spain.

Eriksson, in a Subaru, completed the rally in an overall time of four hours, 14 minutes and 11 seconds to win ahead of Sainz, in a Ford, and four-times champion Juha Kankkunen of Finland, also in a Ford.

His win consolidated the Subaru team's lead in the Manufacturer's Championship, but left defending champion Tommi Makinen of Finland in command of the drivers' series for Mitsubishi.

Sainz hit a sheep during the opening stage of the leg and although he was fastest in every other special stage, including the 24th and final one of the rally, he could not overcome the deficit.

The Spaniard, a double world champion, could not avoid the animal with his Ford Escort car and the accident caused him to drop back to fifth place on the special stage and to third overall initially.

Sainz was the overnight leader on Sunday and second on Monday, but this incident allowed his ford team-mate Kankkunen to move up to second behind Eriksson and left him with only the hope of closing the gap with steady driving — and hoping for the Swede to make a mistake.

Eriksson was third on the 19th stage at Te Anau North, the opening stage of the final day, run over gravel roads in fine and windy conditions, but consolidated his overall lead ahead of Sainz and stayed there.

He did not need to win another stage throughout the final day, but always finished close enough to Sainz to retain his advantage as the Spaniard cut the lead from 34 seconds to 13 to finish second.

Krajicek and Rios win openers at ATP championship

MASON, Ohio (R) — Last year's Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek had no trouble putting away this year's runner-up as the 12th-seeded Dutchman scored a 6-3 6-4 victory over Frenchman Cedric Pioline on the opening night of the star-studded ATP Championship on Monday.

Ninth seed Marcelo Rios of Chile secured a 6-3 7-5 victory over Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden in another first round match on a day that saw one seeded player fall by the wayside.

In a minor upset, Ukrainian Andrei Medvedev ousted promising 15th-seeded Briton Tim Henman 6-3 6-3.

The ATP Championship features the most formidable field in a non-grand slam event on the ATP Tour this year. Nine of the top 10 players in the world, led by World No. 1 Pete Sampras, are competing. Only ninth-ranked Carlos Moya of Spain is missing from the world's elite.

The top eight seeds all received first round byes, but the schedule features a highly anticipated first-round matchup with French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil taking on former number one Andre Agassi, who has been mostly missing in action this year.

Kuerten, who reached the Canadian Open final Sunday, will make his debut as a top-10 player after becoming the first Brazilian to crack the top-10 with Monday's rankings.

The 15th-ranked Krajicek knew that his match against Pioline might be easier than expected. Following his surprising run to the Wimbledon final, Pioline has been slowed by an arm injury.

"On paper, it was a very tough match to be a seeded player playing a guy ranked in the top 20 who just came off an important final," Krajicek said. "But I knew he was a little injured in the arm."

Krajicek converted five of 10 break chances against Pioline — in the third and ninth games of the first set and the second, fourth and 10th games of the second set.

Both the 11th-ranked Rios and No. 25 Bjorkman had difficulties from the service line.

Rios managed to put just 46 per cent of his first serves in play, while Bjorkman posted a dismal 34 per cent first serve percentage.

The Swede also suffered eight double faults, including three in the second game of the match.

"That was probably the worst percentage I have had in a match, I think," Bjorkman said. "It was just one of those days. No excuses, I just had the wrong rhythm the



Richard Krajicek

whole match. I never found the way to get back in it."

The frequently surly Rios, who trailed Bjorkman 4-1 in the second set before winning six of the last seven games, refused to concede that his serve was off.

"I think I didn't serve bad," he insisted. "I think I played pretty solid and when I had to serve good, I served really good."

Testud leads French trio in Acura Classic

MANHATTAN BEACH, California (R) — Sandrine Testud led a French charge into the second round of the Acura Classic tennis tournament on Monday with a straight sets victory over American Chanda Rubin.

Testud banged out a 6-4, 6-2 victory in 65 minutes over an error-prone Rubin on the tournament's opening night to join compatriots Nathalie Tauziat and Anne-Gaëlle Sidot in the second round of the hard-court event.

Tauziat needed four match points to close out Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria 6-4, 7-6 (7-5) in a

tight contest, while 18-year-old Sidot swept past Russian Elena Likhovtseva 6-3 6-2.

The top four seeds — World No. 1 Martina Hingis, Monica Seles, Amanda Coetzer and Lindsay Davenport — all received first-round byes.

When Testud was told she would have to play Seles next, the honest Frenchwoman responded: "I'm happy to play her, she's a great player. I hope she's not going to kill me."

If Testud is worried, Sidot has real problems after earning a second-round meeting with the seemingly

invincible Hingis.

The 16-year-old Swiss prodigy brings a 54-1 1997 match record into the tournament as she goes for her 10th title of the year and a three-week sweep of three California hardcourt events.

Testud scored her first victory over Rubin Monday after losing to her earlier this year at the Australian open and in Linz, where the American claimed her first WTA tour title.

But the win was not pretty. "I don't think we played very good match today, especially in the first set," said the 19th-ranked Tes-

tud. "She missed a lot of shots today to help me win the match."

Rubin tested a sprained right ankle which forced her to retire in the opening-round last week. But she offered no excuses for her poor effort, which included eight costly double faults and several foot faults.

"That's really sick, not even giving yourself a chance to get the serve in play," lamented Rubin.

"I made too many unforced errors and everything went down hill the second set."

Magical Mutola set for return to football

ATHENS (AFP) — Maria Mutola, the 1993 world 800 metres champion, said here on Tuesday that she would love to return to her first sporting love — football — but only after she has reclaimed her world title which she lost in dramatic fashion in 1995.

The 24-year-old Mutola, who made her first appearance in the Olympic Games aged 15, lost the chance of defending her title in 1995 when she was disqualified, after finishing first in her semi-final, for running outside of her lane too early — on seeing that she had lost out she collapsed in a heap on the floor screaming "no! no!"

"I want my title back there is no question about that but always in the back of my mind I am thinking about how much I enjoyed playing football and I would really like to play it professionally," Mutola said.

"I am keener now to return to it as the women's game is a lot better organised and is now much more skilful. You never forget your first love!" Mutola said.

Mutola, who was spotted playing football in Maputo just as top sprinter Ato Boldon was plucked from the football pitch to enjoy success on the track, is an emotional character who celebrated her last African Games win by doing a lap of honour which included climbing into the presidential box and hugging her president.

When she claimed her third world indoor title in Paris in March she burst into tears and dedicated the win to her father who had been killed in a car crash prior to the championships.

"I didn't want to come. I was so upset as my father was my idol and role model," she said.

"I went back to Mozambique but I couldn't eat or do anything and said to my family what is it worth (a gold medal) in comparison

to my father's life. However, they said go and win it for your father," Mutola added.

Mutola claims that to regain her title here would not be as important to her as that day in Paris because she was so driven by her father's memory.

"Paris will remain a special moment for me which nothing here can surpass. Winning the title like I've said is important but it will not have the intensity of that feeling I had in March," Mutola said.

She has not run at all in Europe during the outdoor season preferring to train in Eugene, Oregon, where she went to school thanks to an Olympic grant — though she will stay to run in the main meetings after the championships.

"I have not run a lot this season but I feel in good shape and I hope everything goes well for me. I have never needed a lot of races so I will have few excuses if

I lose here," she said.

Mutola's chances have been boosted with the almost certain withdrawal of Russian Svetlana Masterkova, who beat her in the Olympic final last year though the little Mozambican was suffering from pneumonia.

The Russian, who had to be stretchered off with an ankle injury following the 1500 semi-finals on Sunday, added insult to injury by breaking Mutola's 1,000 metres record in Brussels later in August running 2min 28.98 — Mutola's record stood at 2:29.34.

Mutola is accustomed to the hard knocks of life just as she was on the pitches of Maputo but this week she should taste once again the deserved taste of success — for someone so young she has been there before, she knows what it's like and more importantly, like a true champion, she liked it so much she keeps on coming back for more.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH

THOSE LITTLE GREY CELLS

Both vulnerable. West deals.

NORTH
♠ A J 10 7 2
♥ A
♦ A K Q J
♣ A 3 2

WEST
♠ K 3
♥ K Q J 9 8 2
♦ Q 6 5
♣ Q 6 5

EAST
♠ 6 4
♥ 10 9
♦ 10 9 8 7
♣ A 10 9 8 7

SOUTH
♠ Q 8 6 5
♥ 7 6 5 4
♦ Q 3 2
♣ K J

The bidding:
WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH
20 Dbl Pass 2♠
Pass 30 Pass Pass
Pass 3♠ Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

You really think that, after you could bid hearts, I would have passed with enough to make a slam a good venture had you simply continued with four spades? How many times do you want to bid the same values? You were fortunate that it was I who was declaring the hand."

"I was feeling lucky," Hastings replied. "I can't for the life of me think how you managed to guess the hand."

"Guess? Guess?" shrieked Poirot. "Poirot, guess? What do you take me for, man am I? I used those little grey cells, that is all. The hand was an open book from the very first trick."

"West was marked with the king-queen of hearts by the opening lead, and there was no way to make the contract if the king of spades could not be finessed — it was too much to hope for a singleton king with East. I had to get to hand for the trump finesse with a club. Had West held the ace of clubs as well, he would not have opened with a weak two-bid — the hand would have been good enough for one heart. Therefore, when I led a club at the second trick and East followed low, rising with the ace was automatic. West on pass!"

Puerto Rico upset champions USA at World Under-22 Basketball Championship

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Puerto Rico upset defending champions United States 74-69 at the World Under-22 men's basketball championship here Tuesday to inflict the first defeat on the Americans at this level.

In the shock result of the tournament, the Puerto Ricans came from 43-35 down at half-time to overtake the U.S., with guard Edgar Padilla landing two long range baskets in the final stages to seal victory.

The win left Puerto Rico as the only unbeaten team of the 12 competing in two pools after four preliminary rounds at the World Championships.

Forward Shariff Fajardo scored a game-high 21 points for Puerto Rico, while Padilla finished with 14 points.

Mike Jones hit 15 for the U.S. and Brad Miller shot 13.

Yugoslavia won their second match of the tournament with a seven-point victory over Lithuania in Group B.

The Yugoslavs cut loose from the opposition late in the second term to clinch a 77-70 win.

Turkey ended Spain's unbeaten run in Group A with a 71-54 win after leading 31-27 at half-time.

Spain led by eight early but once the Turks recovered they were unflappable, with outstanding centre Huseyin Besok leading the way with a game-high 19 points.

Argentina came from 45-

40 behind at half-time to take advantage of wayward passing and turnovers from Australia to win the late match 81-67 and share top of group A with Turkey and Spain on three wins each.

Fabrizio Oberto and

Lucas Victoriano scored 22 points each as Argentina grabbed the lead with five minutes left.

The final preliminary round will be played Wednesday to decide Friday's quarter-finals.

MAJOR LEAGUE RESULTS

National League

Atlanta	6	Pittsburgh	0
San Francisco	9	Cincinnati	1
Florida	4	Houston	1
Philadelphia	7	Colorado	3
New York	4	St. Louis	2

American League

New York	5	Kansas City	4
Cleveland	7	Detroit	2
Minnesota	9	Toronto	3
Boston	11	Texas	5
Milwaukee	5	Anaheim	2

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Israel prepares extradition order for PNA police chief

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel is preparing an extradition demand for Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Police Chief Ghazi Jabali, whom it accuses of sending policemen to attack Jewish settlers, the justice ministry said Tuesday.

Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein acknowledged, however, that there were no expectations that the PNA would honour the request.

Israel has issued numerous extradition orders for Palestinians suspected of involvement in anti-Jewish attacks since the Palestinian autonomy government was created in 1994, but none have been honoured.

Israel insists that peace accords signed with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) oblige the PNA to turn over suspected criminals, but this is rejected by the Palestinians.

Israel issued an arrest warrant against Mr. Jabali last week, saying it had proof he ordered West Bank policemen to carry out attacks on Jewish settlers.

Israel last month arrested four Palestinian policemen from the self-rule towns of

Nablus and Tulkarem after shots were fired at Jewish settlers in the northern West Bank.

The PNA subsequently detained the commanding officer of three of the policemen for questioning about the Israeli allegations. But the authority has rejected the Israeli accusations against Mr. Jabali, who is based in Gaza City.

Relations between Israeli and Palestinian security forces have deteriorated steadily since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government came to power last year.

Most security cooperation between the two sides was cut off in March when peace talks broke down following Israel's decision to build a new Jewish neighbourhood in an Arab area of east Jerusalem.

Israel accuses the Palestinian police of doing nothing to prevent militants from carrying out anti-Jewish attacks, the worst of which was a double suicide bombing last week in Jerusalem which killed 15 people.

Palestinian security chief hints Hizbollah behind market bombings

JERICHO (AP) — At the headquarters of the Palestinian secret service, the absence of bustle is telling. There are no Islamist militants or political activists waiting to be questioned about the Jerusalem market bombing last week.

West Bank security chief Jibril Rajoub seems in no rush to comply with the demands of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the U.S. for a crackdown on the militants blamed for the attack.

"First of all, we are not working for the prime minister of Israel," Colonel Rajoub said in an interview Monday with the Associated Press.

"We will not raise a white flag as a result of pressure and threats. We will not dance according to Mr. Netanyahu's song and symphony."

Such tough statements bode ill for U.S. diplomatic efforts to rescue the peace process, which are scheduled to resume at the end of the week with the return of U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross.

In response to Col. Rajoub's comments, Israeli government spokesman Moshe Fogel said the Palestinians were obligated under the Oslo peace accords to fight terrorism with Israel. "We believe that it is in the interest of the Palestinians in the long run to fight Hamas terror," he said, referring to the group blamed for the attack.

Col. Rajoub, 44, head of the feared preventive security force which operates in the West Bank and clandestinely in Arab east Jerusalem, is viewed by diplomats as a possible successor to Yasser Arafat.

He insisted that no one yet knows who carried out the double-bombing that claimed 15 lives.

Col. Rajoub said he believed the bombers — two Palestinians in their 20s, according to Israel — were sent as part of an effort to destroy the peace process, and Mr. Netanyahu "immediately took measures against the Palestinian National Authority as if we are the enemies."

Since the bombing, Israel has prevented Palestinians from moving between West Bank towns and has closed the borders with Egypt and Jordan. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been barred from their jobs in Israel.

Hamas, which carried out a series of suicide attacks that claimed more than 60

lives in 1996, claimed responsibility in a leaflet, but its authenticity has not been confirmed.

But there is evidence, Col. Rajoub said, that points to outsiders: 20 Jordanian dinars were found in one suicide bomber's pocket, and the labels of their clothes had been cut out.

Suspicious, both Israeli and Palestinian, are turning toward Hizbollah, the Iran-backed Lebanese militia that is fighting to expel Israeli forces from south Lebanon.

Col. Rajoub noted that a Lebanese man associated with Hizbollah arrived in Israel on a forged British passport last year and was seriously wounded by a bomb that exploded in his hotel room.

"As far as I know, and everybody knows, Hizbollah is trying to initiate such attacks," said Col. Rajoub.

Col. Rajoub said local Hamas activists were no longer the threat they were a year ago.

"Their local leaders became more realistic and more moderate, and we should not push them again," Col. Rajoub said.

"It is our responsibility to encourage this line of moderate people."

In March 1996, Palestinian police jailed hundreds of activists from Hamas as well as the leaders of the Islamic Jihad.

Col. Rajoub said the difference now is, in part, the attitude of the new Israeli leader who has undermined peace and set the stage for violence with provocative decisions such as building Jewish settlements.

"Then the Israeli government dealt with the Palestinian [National] Authority and Chairman Arafat as their partners. The present Israeli government is dealing with the Palestinians as their enemies," said Col. Rajoub.

"I don't think we can crack down on Hamas or any other opposition faction while we are under such siege ... such pressure from the Israeli government," said Col. Rajoub.

But an Israeli official said Mr. Arafat's Deputy Mahmoud Abbas told Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy in a phone conversation Monday that the Palestinians were prepared to resume full security cooperation with Israel, Mr. Abbas stressed that anyone who says otherwise is not speaking for Mr. Arafat, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

French court adjourns decision on bail order for war crimes suspect

BORDEAUX, France (AFP) — A court Tuesday adjourned a decision on whether to restrict the movements of former Minister Maurice Papon, who is due to go on trial in October for crimes against humanity during World War II.

The appeal court adjourned its decision until Thursday on an application for travel restrictions against Mr. Papon, notably confiscation of his passport and identity documents.

The bail application was made by the prosecutor's office at the request of Nazi Hunter Arno Klarsfeld, one of the lawyers in the case representing the association of daughters and sons of deported French Jews.

The prosecutor's office in this southwestern city requested that Mr. Papon, 86, be barred from leaving

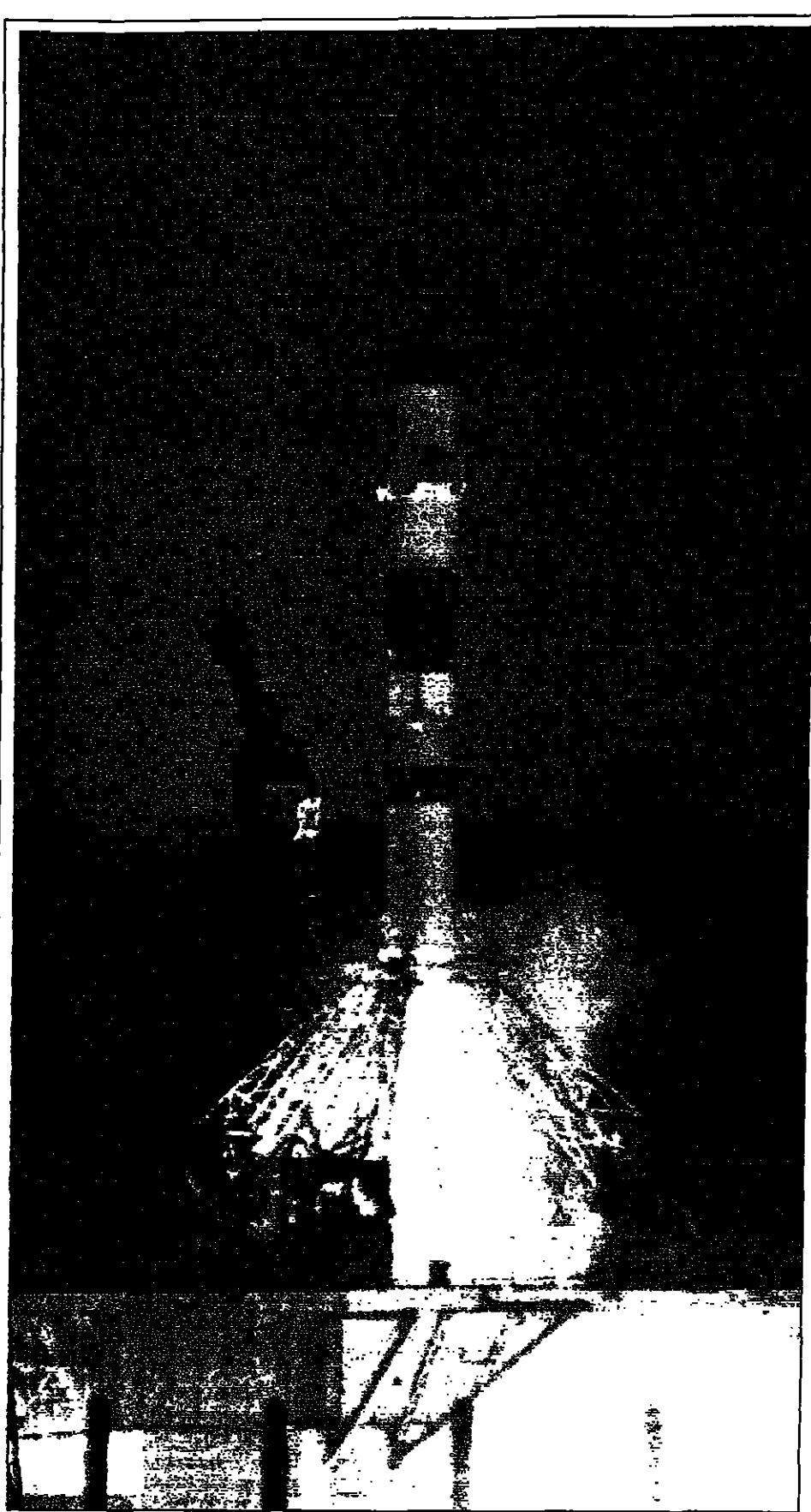
the country, and that he inform the authorities whenever he wishes to leave Paris, where he lives.

Papon is the sole survivor of four Frenchmen charged with crimes against humanity for collaboration with Germany's Nazi regime during World War II.

The charges relate to his role in the deportation of 1,560 Jews to Nazi death camps in Poland. As a Vichy official at the Bordeaux prefecture, Mr. Papon was responsible for "Jewish affairs" in the region.

After the war, Mr. Papon went on to high office, serving as the prefect of Paris and as budget minister under President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

His role in Bordeaux was exposed by a Jewish resistance fighter who himself narrowly escaped a French police roundup of Jews.



ENGINEERS ON THEIR WAY TO MIR: Russian spacecraft 'Soyuz' blasts off from the Baikonur cosmodrome carrying two Russian cosmonauts Tuesday. Commander Anatoly Solovyov and flight engineer Pavel Vinogradov's on board the Soyuz spacecraft will dock on August 7 with the Mir orbital station, where they plan vital but risky repairs to save the vessel (Reuters photo)

Mir replacement crew launch for outer space

BAIKONUR, Kazakhstan (AP) — A giant Soyuz rocket blasted off Tuesday, carrying a replacement crew to the Mir space station, where the old team grappled with a new problem — the breakdown of the oxygen generators.

The Soyuz-U booster rocket lifted off on schedule at 7:36 p.m. Moscow time, carrying a capsule with two cosmonauts who have trained extensively for a delicate repair mission aboard the Mir.

Anatoly Solovyov and Pavel Vinogradov are to dock with the Mir on Thursday. 400 kilometers above earth, and are expected to spend more than six months on the spacecraft.

There, their most important mission will be to repair the damage caused by a collision with a cargo ship on June 25.

The Mir has suffered a string of breakdowns in recent months, and the latest problem with the oxygen generation system renewed concerns about the safety of the 11-year-old space station.

Russian and U.S. officials downplayed the seriousness of the newly revealed glitch, which they said has been an on-and-off problem for the past week, and said the three-man crew was in no danger.

But the problem again put the focus on the Mir's breakdowns only hours before the new crew blasted off from the Baikonur cosmodrome in the former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan.

The two Russians and one American on board were using oxygen canisters for the second straight day Tuesday, according to the U.S. Space agency NASA.

The oxygen generating system breaks down periodically, but the Mir is so large that the existing oxygen sup-

ply is sufficient to last for several days. In addition, the crew has enough oxygen canisters to last for more than two months.

Kathleen Maliga, a NASA spokeswoman at Russian mission control, said the problem first surfaced last week when the generation system, which had been off, was turned back on but subsequently began turning itself off. Repairs have been under way for the past two days, she said.

"We're not worried," she said. Obviously we'd like for it to be working, and we're talking to the Russians, but nothing happened different today from yesterday."

In the unlikely event all five Mir occupants have to be evacuated during the time both crews are aloft, they would be able to escape in two escape vehicles — the Soyuz now standing by, and the one the replacement crew arrives in.

Space officials said they expected the generators to be working again later Tuesday.

The two new crewmembers, Messrs. Solovyov and Vinogradov, lifted off after a traditional send-off from top space officials at Baikonur. Their first big job is set for Aug. 20, when they will attempt a difficult repair effort to restore the damaged space station to more or less full power.

The Mir has been running on half power since the June 25 collision, and the current mission will help determine whether the station can be patched up and safely host humans for another two years, as the Russians would like.

The cosmonauts will have to open the airless Spelr module and reattach power cables that had to be disconnected after the crash, which ruptured the module.

But fixing the damaged station was not the only item

on their agenda. "It is not right to call us repairmen," Mr. Vinogradov said Monday, speaking to journalists from behind a glass window to protect against infection. "No one has relieved us of our other scientific duties, and we'll be busy carrying them out until the very last day."

Repairs had been scheduled to be carried out by the current crew, but the work was delayed after commander Vasily Tsibilyev reported an irregular heartbeat.

Mr. Tsibilyev and crew mates Alexander Lutsutkin and U.S. Astronaut Michael Foale have been preparing for the new crew's arrival, packing equipment into a progress cargo ship now docked with Mir.

The progress will be disengaged Wednesday to make room for the arriving spacecraft. The cargo ship will redock in two weeks and later be jettisoned. It was during a practice docking that the previous supply ship rammed the Mir.

Mr. Solovyov and Mr. Vinogradov are expected to make up to six spacewalks inside and outside the spacecraft over the next two months.

The Russian crews will overlap for about a week, and then Mr. Tsibilyev and Mr. Lutsutkin will return to earth.

Mr. Foale will stay on board until he is replaced in late September or early October by U.S. Astronaut David Wolf, who will travel to the space station aboard the American space shuttle Atlantis.

Cooperation with the U.S. Space programme brings in vital income for Russia's struggling space programme, which has suffered deep financial cuts since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Hurley bewails boy's bottom

LONDON (AFP) — British actress and model Elizabeth Hurley hates her bottom because it is too small and looks like a boy's, she confided. "My body isn't perfect. I don't have a bottom. I don't have the latest edition of the Tatler magazine published Tuesday. 'I've always had a boy's bottom. When I was a teenager I used to stuff tissues into the back pockets of my jeans in an attempt to look curvy.'"

Naked couple fined over Adam and Eve pose in Cathedral

COLOGNE, Germany (AFP) — They chose a Biblical theme, but a young couple who posed naked for a photographer at the altar of Cologne's 13th century cathedral failed to achieve much religious inspiration. The 23-year-old part-time female model was given a suspended fine of \$325 after saying she regretted her act and bursting into tears before a court here, the Bild daily reported. Her lawyer said she was talked into the Adam and Eve pose by a photographer, who has already been given a four-month suspended jail sentence and fined.

Elvis was king of civil rights, historian says

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (R) — Elvis Presley should be remembered as one of America's most influential civil rights figures, a professor and rock music historian at the University of Florida said. "With his very first recording in 1954, Presley did something no one had ever done before. He brought black culture and white culture together on one record," said William McKee, a University of Florida journalism professor and co-author of the soon-to-be released "Norton Book of Rock 'n' Roll." Aug. 16 will mark the 20th anniversary of the death of the "King of Rock 'n' Roll" from a heart attack.

Parlez Français, please

PARIS (AFP) — While many French people are busy enjoying their summer holidays, the French Culture Ministry is crusading to defend the French language against English-speaking invaders. The ministry has just published the results of a contest in which some 32,000 French-speaking people were asked to pluck English words from a French text and replace them with true French terms. While basking on the beach, the casual reader of the ministry news letter can thereby learn how to express such Anglicisms as "briefing," "scoop," "dumping," "leader" and "marketing" in purer but often longer French.

Surgery adds stature to short people in China

BEIJING (R) — Chinese tired of being short can turn to Dr. Xia Hetao to make them taller through limb-lengthening surgery, the China Daily said Monday. Xia normally performs such operations to correct limb deformities and dwarfism, but some people unhappy with their height have sought him out to perform cosmetic surgery, the newspaper said. One such patient included an aspiring model hoping to reach the height requirement for modelling school, it said. Xia, a professor at the Capital University of Medical Science, succeeded in lengthening the legs of Xiao Min to lift her height to 1.78 metres from 1.75 metres, enabling her to qualify for the school, it said.

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